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Andrew Cornes
Jan '70

TO

MY YOUNGER BRETHREN

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TO MY YOUNGER BRETHREN

CHAPTERS ON PASTORAL LIFE AND WORK

BY THE RIGHT REV.

HANDLEY C. G. MOULE, D.D.

LORD BISHOP OF DURHAM

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TO

MY DEAR BROTHER AND VICAR,

THE REV. JOHN BARTON, M.A.,

INCUMBENT OF TRINITY CHURCH, CAMBRIDGE,

AND RURAL DEAN,

AND TO MY DEAR BROTHERS AND FRIENDS,

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"Give those who teach pure hearts and wise,
Faith, hope, and love, all warm'd by prayer;
Themselves first training for the skies
They best will raise their people there."

ARMSTRONG.

PREFACE.

THE following pages do not appear to need any extended preface; their topic is set forth in the first lines of the first chapter. With what success it has been handled is another matter.

But as a writer reviews his own words, it is inevitable that some sort of *envoi* should present itself to his mind. In this case the *envoi* seems to me to be the vital necessity of personal holiness in the Christian Minister, in order to the right working of the Christian Ministry; a personal holiness which shall be no mere form moulded from without but a life developed into manifestation and action from within.

Never did the Church of Christ more need to remember this than at the present day.

The strongest surface currents of the age are against it; alike that of unregulated, hurrying, indiscriminate enterprize, and that of an exaggerated ecclesiasticism. In the one case the worker's communion with God tends to be sacrificed to the work, the fountain choked for the sake of the stream. In the other case there is a serious risk that "the Church" may come to be regarded as an almost substitute for the Lord in matters affecting the life and growth of the Christian man, and of course of the Christian Minister. Sacred are the claims of order and cohesion, but more sacred and more vital still is the call to the individual constituent of the community to come to the living Personal Christ, "nothing between," and to abide in innermost intercourse with Him, and to draw every hour by faith on His great grace.

If these simple pages may at all, in His most merciful hands, promote the holy cause of such a hidden life and its fruitful issues, it will indeed be happiness to the writer. In

these days of stifling materialism in philosophy, and withering naturalism in theology, but in which also the Holy Spirit, far and wide, is breathing upon us in special mercy from above, there is no duty more pressing on the Christian than to seek, in the world of work, after that life which is "lived in the flesh by faith in the Son of God," and which is manifested in the strong and patient "meekness of wisdom."

RIDLEY HALL, CAMBRIDGE,
April 22nd, 1892.

"*Servant of God, be fill'd*
With Jesu's love alone;
Upon a sure foundation build,
On Christ the corner-stone;
By faith in Him abide,
Rejoicing with His saints;
To Him with confidence, when tried,
Make known all thy complaints."

MORAVIAN HYMN-BOOK.

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"What contradictions meet
In Ministers' employ!
It is a bitter sweet,
A sorrow full of joy;
No other post affords a place
For equal honour or disgrace."

OLNEY HYMNS.

"The Interpreter had Christian into a private Room, and bid his Man open a Door; the which when he had done, Christian saw a Picture of a very grave Person hang up against the Wall, and this was the fashion of it: It had eyes lift up to Heaven, the best of Books was in its hand, the Law of Truth was written upon its lips, the World was behind his back; it stood as if it Pleaded with Men, and a Crown of gold did hang over its head."

PILGRIM'S PROGRESS.

CHAPTER I.

THE SECRET WALK WITH GOD (i.).

Pastor, for the round of toil
See the toiling soul is fed;
Shut the chamber, light the oil,
Break and eat the Spirit's bread;
Life to others would'st thou bring?
Live thyself upon thy King.

CHAPTER I.

THE SECRET WALK WITH GOD (i.).

LET me explain in this first sentence that when in these pages I address "my Younger Brethren," I mean brethren in the Christian Ministry in the Church of England. Let me limit my reference still further, by premising that very much of what I say will be said as to brethren who have lately taken holy Orders, and are engaged in the work of assistant Curacies.

Day by day, for many years past, my life has lain among men preparing themselves for just that work. As a matter of course my thoughts have run incessantly in that direction. Many a lecture in the library where we work together, and many a conversation in dining-hall, or by study fire, or in college garden, or on country road, has given point to those thoughts and enabled me, I trust, better to

understand my younger Brethren, and with more sympathy to make myself, as an elder brother, understood by them. What I here seek to do, with the gracious aid of our blessed Master, is somewhat to extend the range of such talks, and to ask a friendly hearing from younger Brethren in the holy Ministry with whom I have never had the opportunity of speaking personally.

I have not the least intention of writing a treatise on the Christian Pastorate. To talk to young Christian Ministers about some important details of pastoral life and work, but above all of life, inward and outward—this is my simple purpose.

One day in each week, at Ridley Hall, we unite in special prayer, without liturgical form, for those members of the Hall who have gone out into actual ministry. As I lead my dear younger Brethren in that supplication, the heart feels itself full of many, very many, well-remembered faces, characters, lives. It seems to see those many old friends scattered abroad in the Lord's work-field ; and it sees, of course,

a very large variety among them, in the way of both character and circumstances. But, with all this consciousness of differences, my thoughts and my petitions always, by a deep necessity, run for all alike along three main paths. The first prayer is for the young Clergyman's inner and secret Life and Walk with God. The second is for his daily and hourly general Intercourse with Men. The third is for his official Ministrations of the Word and Ordinances of the Gospel. And in all these directions, after all, one desire, one prayer, has to be offered, the prayer that everywhere and always, from the inmost recesses of life to its largest and most public circumference, the Lord and Master may take, and keep, full possession of the servant. I pray that in secret devotion, and in secret habits, Jesus Christ may be intensely present with the man; and that in common intercourse, in all its parts, He may be the constant and all-influencing Companion, to stimulate, to control, to chasten, to gladden, to empower; and that in the preaching of the Word the servant may really and manifestly speak from, and for, and in, his

Lord; and that in ministration of the sacramental and other Ordinances he may truly and unmistakably walk before Him in holy simplicity, holy reverence, and full spiritual reality, "serving the Lord," and serving the flock, "with all humility of mind."

Acts xx. 19.

My present talks on paper will take very much the lines of these prayers. Secret walk with God, common and general walk with men, special ministrations—I desire to say a little on each and all of these points, and more or less in this order, though without attempting too rigid an arrangement, where one subject must often run over into another.

Let me take up the first great topic of the three for a few preliminary words in this chapter: THE SECRET WALK WITH GOD of the young Pastor of Christ's flock.

My brotherly reader will not need any long explanation or careful apology from me here. He knows as well as I do, on the one hand, that a close secret walk with God is unspeakably important in pastoral life, and, on the other hand, that pastoral life, and not least in

its early days, is often allowed to hinder or minimize the real, diligent work (for it is a work indeed in its way) of that close secret walk. He finds all too many possible interferences with the inner working on the part of the outer. Such interferences come from very different quarters. The new Curacy, the new duties and opportunities, if the man has his heart in his ministry, will prove intensely interesting, and at first, very possibly, encouragement and acceptance may predominate over experiences of difficulty and trial. Services, sermons, visits to homes and to schools, with all the miscellanies that attend an active and well-ordered parochial organization—these things are sure to have a special and exciting interest for most young men who have taken Orders in earnest. And it will be almost inevitable that the Curate, under even the most wise, considerate, and unselfish of Incumbents, should find "work" threatening rapidly to absorb so much, not of time only but thought and heart, that the temptation is to abridge and relax very seriously indeed secret devotion, secret study of Scripture, and generally secret

discipline of habits, that all-important thing. Then, on the other hand, there is a risk and trial from a region quite opposite. The Curate comes to his new work, and takes up his abode in lodgings—alone. Only a few months ago, perhaps only a few weeks ago, he was in rooms at College, amidst all the social as well as mental interests of University life, and (so it is, thank God, for many University men now) feeling on every side the help of Christian friendship and fellowship of the warmest and truest sort. And now, socially and as to fellowship in Christ, he is, to speak comparatively, alone. I say, *comparatively*. Very likely he has found in his Incumbent a friend and elder brother, perhaps a friend and loving father, in the Lord. And most probably he will find among his people, and that very soon if he is on the watch, friends in Christ, gentle or simple. He may be associated with a brother Curate or Curates; and if so, the inmost aim of both or all ought to be, and in most cases will be, not only to work in the same parish but to work heart to heart as "in Him.' Nevertheless, the Vicar or Rector, though a

friend, is a very busy friend; and so is the brother Curate; and the Christian friend in the parish is after all only one of the many souls to whom the man has to minister, and he must not forget those who perhaps need him most just because they are least congenial to him. So the sense of change, of solitude, in such part of his life as is spent indoors, may be, and, as I know, very often is, real and deep, sad and sorrowful, and in itself not wholesome, to the young Minister of Christ. Possibly my reader knows nothing of all this; but I think it more likely that at least he knows something of it. And it needs his prompt and watchful dealing if it is not to hurt him greatly. Solitude will not by itself, if I judge rightly, help him to secret intercourse with God. A feeling of solitude, under most circumstances, much more tends, *by itself*, to drive a man unhealthily inward, in unprofitable questionings and broodings, or in still less happy exercises of thought. Or it drives him unhealthily outward, quickening the wish for mere stimulants and excitements of mind and interest. Aye, let me not shrink from saying it, it sometimes

quickens a wish for "stimulants" in the most literal sense of the word. Exhausting and multifarious parochial work, and the lonely bachelor quarters at the day's end, have brought to many a young man sore temptations of that sort, and sometimes they have won the battle, to the wreck and ruin of the work and of the worker.

Well, all these facts or possibilities are just so many reminders that the new Curate's life will not, of itself, greatly help him to maintain and quicken his Secret Walk with God, that vital necessity for his work. It certainly will *not* do so directly; it will, directly, be a problem, not an aid. But on that very account, dear Brother and reader, your new conditions of life may prove indirectly a most powerful aid, by being a constant and urgent *occasion*. As you are a Minister of Christ, your life and work will, in the Lord's sight, be a failure, yes, I repeat it, a failure, be the outside and the reputation what they may, if you do not walk with God in secret. But therefore your life and work are a daily and hourly occasion for the positive resolve, in His Name, that walk with Him you will. Recognize the risks, right

and left, the risks brought by pastoral activities and interests, and those brought by pastoral loneliness and uncheerfulness. Remember the vital necessity amidst those risks. And then you will the more deliberately purpose and plan how to guard your secret devotions, and how to order your secret hours even when devotion is not your direct duty, so that your Lord shall be indeed there, at the centre, "a living, bright Reality" to you.

Let me plunge into the midst at once, with a few simple suggestions on SECRET DEVOTION.

I ask my younger Brother, then, to keep sacred, with all his heart and will, an unhurried time alone with the Lord, night and morning at the least. I do not intrusively prescribe a length of time. But I do most earnestly say that the time, shorter or longer, must be *deliberately spent*; and even ten minutes can be spent deliberately, while mismanagement may give a feeling of haste to a much longer season. Do not, I beseech you, minimize the minutes; seek for such a fulness of "the Spirit of grace and of supplications," as shall draw you quite the other way. But if the time, any

Zech. xii. 10.

given night or morning, *must* be short, let it nevertheless be a time of quiet, reverent, collected worship and confession and petition. One thing assuredly you can do: you can, if you will, secure a real "Morning Watch" before your day's work begins. I do not say it is easy. Young men very commonly sleep sounder and longer than we seniors do; they are not always easy to rouse in a moment. But they can direct some of their energy to contrive against themselves, or rather *for* themselves, how to secure a regular early rising to meet their Lord. Most ingenious, not to say amusing, are some of the devices which friends of mine have confided to me; schemes and stratagems to get themselves well awake in good time. But after all, in most lodging-houses surely it must be possible to be called early, and to instruct the caller to show no mercy at the chamber door. Anyhow, I do say that the fresh first interview with the all-blessed Master must at all costs be secured. Do not be beguiled into thinking it can be arranged by a half-slumbering prayer in bed. Rise up—if but in loving deference to Him. Appear in the

presence chamber as the servant should who is now ready for the day's bondservice in all things but in this, that he has yet to take the day's oath of obedience, and to ask the day's "grace sufficient," and to read the day's promises and commands, at the Master's holy feet.

I do not recommend an unpractical physical mortification as the rule for such early hours with God. Fully believing that there is a place for definite "abstinence" in the Christian (and certainly in the ministerial) life, I do not think that that place is, as a rule, the early morning hour. Very many men only procure a bad headache for the day by beginning any sort of earnest mental effort without food. Such men should take care accordingly to eat a *chotee házaree* (as old Indians say), "a little breakfast," however little, before they pray and read. There are appliances, simple and inexpensive, by which the man in lodgings can, without giving any one trouble, provide himself with his cup of cocoa or coffee as soon as he is up; and he will be wise to do something of this sort, if he is a man whose work by day is

heavy for both body and spirit, and who is thus specially apt to find the truth of what doctors tell us, that "sleep is, in itself, an exhausting process."

But at any cost, my dear friend and Brother in the Ministry, we must have our Morning Watch with God, in prayer and in His Word, before all the day's action. Not even the earliest possible Church service can rightly take the place of that.

It is obvious to add that punctuality and early hours in the morning will bring into your life another rule; that of punctuality and reasonably good hours at night. No temptation is greater, sometimes, for the man alone than to ignore or break such a rule. And no doubt the exigencies of pastoral life, sometimes, but surely not often, make it hard to keep it. But it is extremely important, for the man who would walk closely and humbly with his God, to end the day deliberately at His feet. And here accordingly is another occasion for watchfulness, and for method, and for will. Do not *drift into the night.* Have a settled hour when, as a habit, you lay interests and inter-

course of other sorts down, and turn unhurried to the holy interview, spreading open your Bible by the lamp, the Bible marked and scored with signs of past research, and then kneeling, or standing, or *pacing*, for your prayer—your prayer which is to be the very simplest (while most reverent) speech with the Lord.

In such acts of worship, morning and night, thought for others, for dear ones, for parishioners, for colleagues, will have its full place of course. Let it be so, with an ever-growing sense of the preciousness of the work of intercession. But I do meanwhile say to my Brother in Christ, take care that no pre-occupation with things pastoral allows you to forget the supreme need of drawing out of Christ's fulness, and out of the treasures of His Word, for *your own* soul and life, as if that were the one and solitary soul and life in existence. We Clergy are in danger of becoming too official, too clerical, even in our prayers. We *are* the Lord's Ministers; we have a cure and charge of souls as the unordained Christian has not; and let us daily remember it, humbly and reverently. But also we are, all the while, sheep of

the flock, absolutely dependent on the Shepherd, men who for their own souls' acceptance, and holiness, and heaven, must for themselves "live at the Fountain." We have to serve others, and "lay ourselves out" for them, daily and hourly. But on that very account, that "our selves" may be, if I may say so, worth the laying out, we must see that "our selves" are, in their own innermost life and experience, filled with the Spirit of God, filled with the presence of an indwelling Lord Jesus Christ by the Spirit. And so we must worship Him, and draw on Him, and abide in Him, and acquaint ourselves with Him, just as if there were no flock at all, that we may the better be of use to the flock.

I am sure that this is an important point for the thought and practice of the young Clergyman. While never really forgetting his ordained character, let him, for the very purposes of his ordained work, continually "live behind" not only the work but the character; living in the presence, in the love, in the life, of his Lord and Head, simply in the character of the redeemed sinner, the personal believer, the

glad younger Brother of the glorious Firstborn, the living Christian with the living Christ; "knowing whom he has believed," and walking by faith in Him. 2 Tim. i. 12.

Do you so live, by His grace and mercy? Is the sitting-room and the bedroom of your curacy-lodging the place where you habitually hold intercourse in this holy simplicity with Him who has loved you and given Himself for you? Then I venture to say that all the more for this, by that same grace and mercy, you shall be enabled to "lay yourself out" for others, in your pastoral charge. You shall understand other men better, by thus securing for your own soul a deeper understanding of the Lord Jesus and a fuller sympathy (if the word is reverent) with Him. I hardly care to analyze how, but somehow, you shall more readily and closely "get at" men through this direct, simple, unofficial, unclerical drawing very near indeed to God in Christ. The more you know Him thus at *first-hand* the more shall you understand alike the needs of the human heart (of which all individual hearts are but various instances), and the supplies that are

laid up for all its needs in Him. And so you shall go out among your people armed, equipped, with a truly heaven-given sympathy and tact. True personal intercourse with the Lord, the very closest and deepest, is the very thing to open the whole man out for others, and to teach him how, with a loving intuition, to look into them and "upon their things."

Phil. ii. 4.

In the next Chapter I shall speak a little more about the young Clergyman's secret devotion, and secret study of the heavenly Word. But enough for the present. And let me close with the quotation of a hymn,[1] a new friend of mine, but already a very dear one, and thankfully added to the treasures of memory. It puts in the simplest form possible, while in a form most beautiful, the vital truth that "intercourse with God is the power for holy service." Happy the young Clergyman whose secret daily life, from its beginning in the "Morning Watch," on

[1] By G. M. Taylor: *Hymns of Consecration and Faith* (Second Edition), No. 349.

through the intercourse and energies of the day, up to the evening hour of weariness and repose, is a translation into experience of that blessed hymn.

"When thou wakest in the morning,
Ere thou tread the untried way
Of the lot that lies before thee
Through the coming busy day;
Whether sunbeams promise brightness,
Whether dim forebodings fall,
Be thy dawning glad or gloomy,
Go to Jesus—tell Him all!

"In the calm of sweet communion
Let thy daily work be done;
In the peace of soul out-pouring
Care be banish'd, patience won
And if earth with its enchantments
Seek thy spirit to enthral,
Ere thou listen, ere thou answer—
Turn to Jesus—tell Him all!

"Then, as hour by hour glides by thee,
Thou wilt blessed guidance know;
Thine own burthens being lighten'd,
Thou canst bear another's woe;
Thou canst help the weak ones onward;
Thou canst raise up those that fall;
But, remember, while thou servest,
Still tell Jesus—tell Him all

"And if weariness creep o'er thee
As the day wears to its close,
Or if sudden fierce temptation
Bring thee face to face with foes—
In thy weakness, in thy peril,
Raise to heaven a truthful call;
STRENGTH AND CALM FOR EVERY CRISIS
COME—IN TELLING JESUS ALL."

CHAPTER II.

THE SECRET WALK WITH GOD (ii.).

He that would to others give
Let him take from Jesus still;
They who deepest in Him live
Flow furthest at His will.

CHAPTER II.

THE SECRET WALK WITH GOD (ii.).

I RESUME the rich subject of Secret Devotion, Secret Communion with God. Not that I wish to enter in detail on either the theory or the practice of prayer in secret; as I have attempted to do already in a little book which I may venture here to mention, *Secret Prayer*. My aim at present, as I talk to my younger Brethren in the Ministry, is far rather to lay all possible stress on the vital importance of the habit, however it may prove best in individual experience to order it in practice. "As a man thinketh in his heart, so is he"; and as a life worketh in its heart, so is it. And the heart of a Christian Minister's life is the man's Secret Communion with God. Prov. xxiii. 7.

Let us Clergymen take as one of our mottoes

that deeply suggestive word of the Lord by
ii. 6. Malachi, where the ideal Levi is depicted: "*He walked with Me* in peace and equity, and did turn many away from iniquity."

Remember with what a heavenly brightness that principle was glorified in the recorded life
Heb. xiii. 20. on earth of "the great Shepherd of the sheep," who in this also "left us an
1 Pet. ii. 22. example, that we should follow His steps." Never did man walk more genuinely with men than the Son of Man, whether it was among the needy and wistful crowds in streets or on hill-sides, or at the dinner-table of the Pharisee, or in the homes of Nazareth, Cana, and Bethany. No Christian was ever so "practical" as Jesus Christ. No disciple ever so directly and sympathetically "served
Acts xiii. 36. his own generation by the will of God" as did the blessed Master. But all the while "His soul dwelt apart" in the Father's presence, and there continually rested and was
John iv. 32, 34. refreshed, and there found the "meat" in the strength of which He travelled that great pilgrimage by way of the Cross to the Throne. Jesus Christ, our Exemplar as well

as our Life, did indeed live behind His work, behind His ministry, behind His ministerial character, in the region of a Filial Communion in which His Father was His all in all for peace and joy, His law of action and His eternal secret of life. And observe, this habitual communion in the midst of active service did not at all supersede in His blessed experience the stated and definite work of worship and petition before and after the busy hours of service. "He was alone, praying"; "He continued all night in prayer to God"; and at last, "He was withdrawn from them about a stone's cast, and kneeled down and prayed."

John vi. 57.

Luke ix. 18; vi. 12; xxii. 41.

All this is not only matter for wondering notice, as we read our New Testament. It is example, it is model. The Head is thus showing His members the way, the only way, to maintain a life among men and for men which shall be full of good for them, because itself ever filled with the life and presence of God.

From a leaflet which came long ago into my hands, I quote the experience of a German Christian, eminently successful in spiritual work;

a passage which will illustrate and bring home my appeal in this whole matter :—

"When Lucius von Machtholf was asked how he carried on religious intercourse with individuals, he wrote :—'I know no other tactics than *first of all* to be *heartily satisfied with my God*, even if He should favour me with no sensible visible blessing in my vocation. Also to remember that preaching and conversation are not so much *my* work as the outcome of the love and joy of the Holy Ghost in my heart, and, afterwards, on my lips. Further, that I must never depend upon any previous fervour or prayers of mine, but upon God's mercy and Christ's dearly-purchased rights and holy intercession ; and cherishing a burning love to Christ and to souls, I must constantly seek for wisdom and gentleness. . . . Finally, I would guard myself from imagining that I know beforehand what I should say, but go to Christ for every good word I have to speak, even to a child, and submit myself to the Holy Spirit, as the Searcher of hearts, who, knowing the individuals I have to do with, will guide and teach me when, where, and how to speak.

"'Be always following, never going before. It were better to be sick in a tent under a burning sun, and Jesus sitting at the tent door, than to be enchanting a thousand listeners where Jesus was not. Be as a day-labourer only in God's harvest-field, ready to be first among the reapers in the tall corn, or just to sit and sharpen another's sickle. Have an eye to God's honour, and have no honour of your own to have an eye to. Lay it in the dust and leave it there. Never let your inner life get low in your search for the lives of others.'"

I dare to say that this quotation contains no mere "counsels of perfection," but principles which are indispensable for the Minister of Jesus Christ who would be not only reputable, popular, and in the superficial sense of the word successful, but—what his dear Master would have him be for His work. And the blessed spirit it suggests and exemplifies is a thing which cometh not in "but by prayer" and by at least such fasting as takes the shape of a most watchful secret self-discipline. When von Machtholf speaks of "never depending on previous prayers" it is obvious what he means;

not that prayer should not precede work, but that nothing should satisfy the worker short of a living and present trust in a living and present Lord. But that trust is the very thing which is developed, and prepared, and matured, in the life of genuine secret intercourse, in which the Lord is dealt with as man dealeth with his friend, and gazed upon and (I may reverently say) studied in His revealed Character, till the disciple does indeed "know *whom* he has believed," "who He is that he should believe on Him." "My soul shall be satisfied . . . when I remember Thee, when I meditate on Thee, in the night watches," aye, and in the Morning Watch also.

2 Tim. i. 12; John ix. 36; Ps. lxiii. 5, 6.

I know not how to get away from this subject; not only because of its intense connexion with the most blissful experiences of the believing soul, but because of its unspeakably important bearing on the work of the Ministry, the Ministry of our own time and of my reader's own generation. Never was there a period when the cry for enterprize and practical energy was louder; and God knows there is occasion enough for the cry, and for the answering

resolve. But never was there a time when the need was greater to distinguish true from false secrets of energy, and to be content with nothing short of the deepest and most divine as our ultimate secret. Do you not well know what I mean? Is there not far and wide in the "Christian world"—I do not speak now of the exterior regions of avowed scepticism or indifference—a tendency to merge the whole idea of religion in that of philanthropic benevolence, and thereby to draw inevitably the idea of philanthropy downward in the end into its least noble manifestations? Is it not a fashionable thing to regard the Christian Ministry, for example, as a useful and ready mechanism with which to work out the social and sanitary amelioration of the lives of the multitude, and so to take him to be the best qualified Clergyman who is, perhaps, the most "muscular" of Christians, or the cleverest at the invention or superintendence of recreations on a large scale, or the quickest student and exponent of the principles or theories of political economy, or possibly of socialistic enterprize? But all this may leave entirely out the very life-blood of

what the New Testament means by the Gospel of the grace of God; and in many, many cases it does entirely leave it out. A conception of "Church work" is widely entertained, and thought to be adequate, out of which is practically dropped all the mystery, and all the mercy; above all, the work and message of the atoning Cross and the dying Lamb; and the need of the sovereign grace of the Holy Ghost to begin and carry out the Regeneration of the soul; and the depth of our Fall; and the offered greatness and splendour of our New Creation; and "that blessed hope, the glorious
Tit. ii. 13. appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ." It is just one wave of the great anti-supernatural tide of our time. Christian work is viewed as much as possible as man's work for man in this present world, under the example, doubtless, of the beneficent life of our Lord, but not under the shadow of Calvary, nor in the light of Pentecost, nor in the definite prospect of an immortality of holy glory.

To counteract this tendency, and to do so *in the right way*, is one of the very noblest

tasks set before the younger Clergy of the English Church in our time. It is for them, under God, in a pre-eminent degree, to find out the secret, and then to live it out, how to be at once the perfectly genuine *man*, devoted to the service of men, carrying what he is and what he believes into the actual surroundings of modern life, not allowing illusions and poetic day-dreams to come between him and facts ; and also the convinced, unwavering, spiritual *Christian*, conversant with his own soul, and with his living Lord and Saviour, and with that sacred, unalterable written Word which that Saviour put into His people's hands, never to be taken out of them. Nothing is more wanted at present in the sphere of "Church life and work," unless I am greatly mistaken, than a generation of young Clergymen (soon to be seniors) who shall conspicuously combine the best forms of practicality with an unmistakable chastened personal spirituality which is seen to be "the pulse of" their busy "machine." And if the spirituality is to be indeed genuine (away with it if it is anything but genuine to the centre), if it is to be quite different on the

one hand from a thing of artificial phrases, and on the other from merely formulated and regulated devoutness, I am deeply sure that its only secret and preservative is a fully-maintained secret walk with God.

"I am rich, and increased with goods, and Rev. iii. 17. have need of nothing." Such was the thought and word of the Laodicean long ago. Is it not in effect the thought, if not the word, of not a few hard workers and energetic enterprizers now? "What do I want with the dialect of 'Christian experience'? What have I, with all these irons in the fire, and a strong hammer and a strong hand with which to strike them, what have I to do with 'old-world faiths' about sin and salvation, about grace and conversion, about pardon and justification? What have I so pressingly to do with much prayer, save in the form of much work? God, I thank Thee that I am a worker; let it be for others to dive into spiritual secrets, if it is good for them to do so."

I would not overdraw the picture. And the words I have put into a possible mouth are words which, if I heard, I hope I should hear

with every wish to judge them fairly and to see where any truth lay in them. But none the less I am sure that those words not unjustly represent a type of thought widely prevalent among even ministerial workers, and that it is a type of thought pregnant with disaster for Christian work. "Thou knowest not that thou art poor"; "I counsel thee to buy of Me"; "I stand at the door and knock: if any man hear My voice and open the door I will come in to him and sup with him, and he with Me." So said Jesus Christ to the Laodicean. And though it may seem paradoxical to compare a man involved in the rush of modern "Church work" with the Laodicean, the comparison may not be always far astray, nor the words of the Lord in Rev. iii. 18 out of place accordingly. To be "neither cold nor hot" towards *Him* is all too possible for us, alas, even when "the irons in the fire" are most numerous, and even when they are being most briskly hammered.

Rev. iii. 17, 18, 20.

So let us listen, making a pause to do so. Perhaps just now the knock may be audible, and certain articulate sounds may come from

outside, saying that a PERSON waits for re-admission to HIS place in our busy, multifarious life, and that HE can be content with nothing short of heart-intimacy with us, and that we, if we would not forsake our own mercy, must be content with nothing short of heart-intimacy with HIM.

"I counsel thee to *buy* of Me." Let us do it; let us pay over, at His feet, our poor fancied wealth of self's energies and undertakings (as regards our own good opinion of them), receiving from Him the heavenly "gold" of His own glorious grace and peace, and the "white robe" of a living and loving conformity to His likeness, and the "eye-salve" of His illumination, in which we see things as He sees them. It is better, as von Machtholf says it is, to have Him within the heart's chamber, at once as Guest and as Host, in that blessed inter-communion, than to be apparently the most successful of organizers or of toilers, strong in ourselves, but without the secret of the Presence of the Lord.

It is scarcely needful, I trust, to explain what I do *not* mean. My very last intention

is to speak slightingly of devoted work and self-sacrificing endeavours, whether or no they take the line which most approves itself to me. A *fainéant* in the English Ministry to-day is something worse than even a cumberer of the ground; he is, I dare to say, like a upas upon it, blighting where he throws his shadow, so conspicuous and so deadly must be the example of such a life in the Minister of such a Gospel. But what I mean, again and again, is this, that the days demand, along with a thoroughgoing while prudent practicality, more and more also of a profound reality of spiritual knowledge of the Lord in those who labour in His Name. With the growing stress of our time we *must* have not less but more of this, in those who are called to meet that stress. This is vital, if we would not be stifled and succumb as Christians altogether.

So this is my plea, dear Brother in the Ministry, now making your first essays in some great city parish, or wherever it may be: cultivate, as for your life, secret intercourse with God.

And with this view, I now say specially, cultivate such intercourse *laying His holy Word*

open before you. I spoke in the previous Chapter of the Bible spread open by the evening lamp, the Bible marked with signs of diligent search. With all my heart I mean to press that thought. It will be best to reserve for another Chapter certain suggestions on methods of Bible study. But I may, and I will at once, offer a few words on the subject in general. It is a subject which lies near my heart, and of the urgent importance of which I am very sure.

Above all then I would entreat you to be a Bible student *at whatever cost of other religious reading*. It is a very common thing to substitute, practically, for the Bible a little library of *livres de piété*, as the French would call them, small "good books." Not very long ago, in the course of an ordination examination, I came across an instructive instance. In answer to a question in a "Pastoral Paper" for candidates for Priest's Orders, a thoughtful young Clergyman stated incidentally that he used every day with great profit certain devotional books, and that about twice a week he took for definite meditation and prayer a

passage from the Gospels. It struck me that here was a strange and sad inversion of the right order of proportion; devotional books daily, and the New Testament (in any sense of earnest meditative study) about twice a week! Very different, I thought, is the view and teaching of the Church of England in this matter of the spiritual reading of her Ministers. What does the Church say, through the Bishop, when the Deacon is ordained Presbyter? "Seeing that you cannot by any other means compass the doing of so weighty a work, pertaining to the salvation of man, but with doctrine and exhortation taken out of the Holy Scriptures, and with a life agreeable to the same; consider how studious ye ought to be in reading and learning the Scriptures. . . . We have good hope that you will continually pray to God the Father, by the mediation of our only Saviour Jesus Christ, for the heavenly assistance of the Holy Ghost; that, by daily reading and weighing of the Scriptures, ye may wax riper and stronger in your Ministry."

And I need not go about to prove that the Church does not mean such daily "reading and

weighing" to wait till the young man is actually ordained Priest. We should scarcely have had the First Homily of the First Book written, if such had been her mind. Have you ever read over that "Voice of the Church"?

A remarkable confirmation of my present contention comes to us from an unexpected quarter. I refer to the Preface prefixed by that ardent Roman Catholic, M. Henri Lasserre, to his remarkable French translation of the Four Gospels, the book which, December 4, 1886, received the cordial benediction of Leo XIII., but within a twelvemonth, such is "the power behind the Pope," was placed on the *Index Expurgatorius*. Probably such passages as the following had much to do with this strange and sudden self-reversal of the judgment of the Vatican.

"A timid school," after the crisis of the Reformation, which finds, of course, little favour with M. Lasserre, and on which, very unjustly, he lays much of the blame of the practical prohibition of the Bible within "the Catholic Church," "a timid school tended thenceforth to strike from the hands of believers the divine

Book which makes the foundation of our faith, and laboured to substitute for it by degrees a pious literature, intended to furnish hearts and minds with a nourishment suited to their weakness, a diet without danger. Some of these books, we own without hesitation, are excellent in themselves, and have contributed to the sanctification of many souls. However, this is the exception. In the majority of these works, where, alas, the sugar of devotion takes the place of the salt of wisdom, the eternal truths and the genuine teachings of the Gospel were soon diluted, and, as it were, lost in strange waters. . . . One and all, the better specimens and the deplorable (*les lamentables*) alike, they are another thing altogether, yes, absolutely another thing, than the Gospel, whose apostolic mission they have noiselessly usurped by an invasion insensible, I had almost called it clandestine. . . . The general ignorance of the Gospels has been the one cause in France, these twenty years, of the success of the scandalous romance which appeared under the title of *La Vie de Jésus*. Among a people moderately familiar with the narratives of St Matthew,

St Mark, St Luke, and St John . . . there would have been no need to refute it. Every one would have seen, without assistance, its flagrant falsifications, its gross sophisms, its absolute emptiness. This deep-seated and complex evil, this enervation of the Christian spirit, this *anæmia* (*cette anémie*) of so many among us, are an object of sorrowful anxiety (*préoccupation*) for the Catholic thinker" (pp. x, xxv).

For the Protestant thinker too, within a Church which has now for centuries, in every possible official way, pressed home the reading of the Bible upon her every member, and of course upon her every Minister, there is material for similar anxieties, *mutatis mutandis*. Bible study, such as our Lord and the Apostles enjoined and encouraged, is not on the increase amongst us, to say the least of it; certainly the ignorance of the blessed Book even among candidates for holy Orders is sometimes, is not seldom, very great indeed. Nay more, there is sometimes, however rarely as yet, an ominous disposition even in clerical circles to shelve the Bible. Quite lately I heard, on excellent authority, that a certain

large Clerical Society, revising its rules, deliberately decided that the meetings shall *not* in future be begun with the reading of Scripture. My friend and Brother, do not swim even on the edges of such a current. Swim with all your might, in your Master's might, against it.

Then lastly I put in my plea, as I sought to do when we were considering the matter of secret prayer, for such a secret study of the Word of God as shall be *unprofessional, unclerical, and simply Christian.* Resolve to "read, mark, and inwardly digest" so that not now the flock but the shepherd, that is to say you, "may embrace and ever hold fast the blessed hope of everlasting life." It will be all the better for the flock. Forget sometimes, in the name of Jesus Christ, the pulpit, the mission-room, the Bible-class; open the Bible as simply as if you were on Crusoe's island, and were destined to live and die there, alone with God. You will be all the fresher, all the more sympathetic and to the point, when you do come to speak to the listening people about the Book. The discoveries which we make in it for our own souls are just the things which

we cannot help reporting so as to interest and attract our brethren; as least, that is the sure tendency of things.

Let me write out a slightly abbreviated extract from a golden book, unhappily no longer in print, *The Christian Ministry*, by that diligent student, loving and laborious Pastor, and heavenly-minded man, the remembrance of whom shines on me like a ray reflected from the Chief Shepherd's face, the late Rev. Charles Bridges.[1]

"The maxim, *Bonus textuarius est bonus theologus*, marks a grand ministerial qualification—'mighty in the Scriptures.' The importance of this is beautifully expressed by Witsius: 'Let the theologian ascend from the lower school of natural study to the higher department of Scripture, and sitting at the feet of God as his teacher, learn from His mouth the hidden mysteries of salvation, *which eye hath not seen nor ear heard, which none of the princes of this world knew*; which the most accurate reason cannot search out; which the heavenly

[1] He died at Hinton Martell, in Dorset, 1869.

chorus of angels, though always beholding the face of God, *desire to look into.* In the hidden book of Scripture, and nowhere else, are opened the secrets of the most sacred wisdom. Let the theologian delight in these sacred Oracles; let him exercise himself in them day and night; let him meditate in them; let him live in them; let him draw all his wisdom from them; let him compare all his thoughts with them; let him embrace nothing in religion which he does not find there. The attentive study of the Scriptures has a sort of constraining power. It fills the mind with the most splendid form of heavenly truth. It soothes the mind with an inexpressible sweetness; it satisfies the sacred hunger and thirst for knowledge; . . . it imprints its own testimony so firmly on the mind, that the believing soul rests on it with the same security as if it had been carried up into the third heaven and heard it from God's own mouth; it touches all the affections, and breathes the sweetest fragrance of holiness upon the pious reader, even though he may not perhaps comprehend the full extent of his reading. . . . We ought to draw our views of divine

truths immediately from the Scriptures themselves, and to make no other use of human writings than as indices marking those chief points of theology from which we may be instructed in the mind of the Lord'" (pp. 79, 80, ed. 1830).

"In thy Orchard, Pembroke Hall," wrote Nicholas Ridley within a few days of his fiery martyrdom, "(the wals, buts, and trees, if they could speake, would beare me witnes), I learned without booke almost all Paules epistles, yea, and I weene all the Canonicall epistles, save only the Apocalyps. Of which study, although in time a great part did depart from me, yet the sweete smell thereof I trust I shall cary with me into heaven; for the profite thereof I thinke I have felt in all my lyfe tyme ever after."

And so shall it be with us also, if we go and do likewise in our "lyfe tyme," our period, not at present of martyrdom but, God knoweth it, of need.

CHAPTER III.

SECRET STUDY OF THE HOLY SCRIPTURES.

Like those Emmaus travellers we go
Forth from the city-gate of things below;
Christ at our side, His Scripture for our light,
Here burning hearts and there the beatific sight.

CHAPTER III.

SECRET STUDY OF THE HOLY SCRIPTURES.

ALREADY I have broken ground to some extent in the all-important subject of private Bible Study. Let me now put before my reader and Brother a few more detailed remarks and suggestions on that subject. Such is the holy Book, and such is the variety of possible modes of study, that all I can dream of doing is to touch some parts and sides of the matter which present themselves with special impressiveness to my own mind, or which experience of the needs of friends has suggested to me somewhat particularly.

To discuss the sacred problems of Scripture Inspiration is not my purpose here. Elsewhere[1] I have attempted to deal with some of them. All I would do here is, in view of what

[1] *Veni Creator*, ch. iii

is truly a "present necessity," to ask my Brethren, very deliberately, not to be in haste to take up with the last and boldest word of what is called the Higher Criticism (I speak particularly now of its application to the Old Testament), as if its "advances" were always towards light and fact. I have no complaint against the term Higher Criticism, which has a recognized place in literary technical language, denoting that familiar and lawful process, the study of books not for their grammar and style only, but in order to infer from their whole phenomena what their age is, and their structure, and their character. The Higher Criticism is a term pointing not to methods and results transcending ordinary intelligence, but to a study which aims "higher" than grammatical and textual questions considered as final. And thus of course the most earnest defender of the supernatural character of the Scriptures may be, and very often is, as diligent a "higher critic" as the extremest anti-supernaturalist.

It is not its definition in the abstract but its actual work and spirit, as seen in many lead-

ing instances, which constrain me to enter an earnest protest against a too easy confidence in this criticism of, particularly, the Old Testament Scriptures. It is "a thing to give us pause" when we are asked to accept it as proved, or at least as extremely probable, that righteous Abel is a myth; that there was little, if any, monotheism before Abraham; no theophany at Sinai; no Wilderness-Tabernacle; no record of the conquest of Canaan written till long generations after the event; not much written record at all till Samuel; few, if any, Psalms before the age of the Captivity, if not before the age of the Maccabees; certainly two if not more Isaiahs, and probably hardly one Daniel; at least, that the book bearing his name dates from the second century before Christ, and is in fact a Palestinian story-book which has not, perhaps, even a nucleus of history within it. It ought to make us stop and think when we are told that Isaiah did not predict coming events; indeed (for the drift of this teaching goes very strongly in that direction), that predictive prophecy is hardly to be recognized anywhere; that it is better out of

our thoughts; that it is but "soothsaying" after all, and that the true work of the prophet was not to fore-tell but to "*forth*-tell," to proclaim present and eternal principles, which again were not revealed to him from above but arrived at by intuitions and meditations within his own consciousness. It is a grave thing to be asked to believe, as many would have us do, that such was the lack of feeling for veracity in ancient Judah that Hilkiah, Jeremiah, and Huldah could arrange for the "discovery" of a fabricated Deuteronomy, and then (*see the narrative* in the Second Book of Kings) get the prophetess to follow up the fabrication with awful denunciations—all fulfilled—in the name of THE LORD Himself. Such theories we are asked to hold in face of our Master Christ's deliberate, persistent, manifold testimony to the supernatural character and *authority* of the Old Testament; to the solidity of its records of fact, to the reality of its predictive element—on which He stayed His sacred soul in Gethsemane, and on the Cross itself. It is no longer a question of details, an inquiry whether the numerals are invariably authentic

xxii. 8-20.

and accurate; whether the minute particulars of a king's death as told in Chronicles tally with the account in Kings. It is a question whether the Old Testament at large is not a singularly and flagrantly untrustworthy record. It is a question whether its literature as a whole is not to be explained, practically, by "natural causes"; including a causation by deliberate, elaborate, and interested untruth.

Is it too much to say that the alternative has come to be this: Was our Lord Himself right or very gravely wrong about the nature of Scripture? Did the Spirit of Pentecost guide the Apostles into all truth, or leave them under a vast illusion in this central matter of their witness? "Do not follow this Book, young men; follow Christ": so said a speaker of high Christian reputation, holding up a Bible, before a great gathering in America, not long ago But what does this mean? Christ carries the Book in His hand; if you follow Him you must follow it. If you decline to follow the Book, your following Him is a following—so far as at present you agree with Him, and not further.

Meantime, what are some facts of the case,

facts not nearly so well remembered now as they should be? One comprehensive fact is that the testimony of nature and of history goes, as a whole, to affirm the veracity of the Scripture records, and to do so more and more pointedly as research advances. In a remarkable recent essay by the Duke of Argyll (*Nineteenth Century*, January, 1891), the growing accumulation of geological evidence for a Great Flood, affecting at least the northern hemisphere, and falling within the human period, is forcibly set out by a master hand. In the same paper is indicated the fast-gathering evidence, now digging up month by month from the soil of Palestine, to the accuracy of the picture of Canaan drawn in the Pentateuch and Joshua. The Ordnance Survey of Sinai has amply shown that the geology of the peninsula confirms down to minute details the record in Exodus. And now the Oxford Arabic Professor is making it, at the least, extremely likely that the Hebrew written two centuries before Christ was more modern by

[1] *See* Sir J. DAWSON: *Modern Science in Bible Lands*, "The Topography of the Exodus."

many generations than that presented by the Book of Daniel.[1]

I am only indicating and suggesting. Remembering the curiously similar history of New Testament criticism during the recent past, some of its stages running out their course within my own memory, I cannot but think, looking from the merely literary view-point, that the days are not far off when the now powerful theories of revolutionary criticism will seem improbable. And so I ask my younger Brethren at least *to pause* before going with the strong, deep stream.

Let me quote a few sentences from the Duke of Argyll's paper :—

"The assumption . . . that precision in research is undermining the credit of the Hebrew Scriptures, is a presumption almost comically at variance with fact. There is, in particular, one 'weapon of precision' which has of late been working wonders in precisely the opposite direction. That weapon is the spade. And what has it been unearthing? Everywhere

[1] *See* MARGOLIOUTH: *The Place of Ecclesiasticus in Semitic Literature.*

over that narrow strip of our planet on which its human interests have been most impressive and profound—everywhere from Tyre and Sidon, from Carmel and Lebanon, on the west, to Babylon and Nineveh and the boundary mountains of Assyria on the east—the spade has been disentombing continuous and triumphant proof of the genuine antiquity and historical character of the Jewish books. . . . Only the other day Mr Flinders Petrie has told us how the spade has uncovered those impregnable walls of the Amorite cities which were reported to invading Israel by the spies of Moses. . . .

"I may be permitted to express a very strong opinion that in recent years Christian writers have been far too shy and timid in defending one of the oldest and strongest outworks of Christian theology. I mean the element of true prediction in Hebrew prophecy. It may be true that in a former generation too exclusive attention had been paid to it. . . . But the reaction has been excessive and irrational. A great mass of connected facts, and of continuous evidence, remains—which

cannot be gainsaid. Even if the greater prophets can be brought down to the very latest date which the very latest fancies can assign to them, they depict and predict overthrows and vast revolutions in the East which did not take place for centuries" (pp. 28, 30).[1]

The analysis of prophetic *consciousness* may be, and in a great measure is, impossible. But the facts of prediction remain. It remains that our Lord Himself predicted. He foretold minutely His own death, and the end of the City and the Temple, and the circumstances of the close of this æon. Was He "soothsaying"? It remains that He perpetually and most emphatically claimed to be the exact

[1] "Professor Huxley speaks of the hopeless position of Christian divines 'raked by the fatal weapons of precision with which the *enfants perdus* of the advancing forces of science are armed.' . . . Perhaps he means the small arms of the modern critical school. If he does, then precision is the very last characteristic which belongs to it. Its methods are largely subjective. Here and there it may have a clearly ascertained fact to rest upon. Here and there it may have arrived at some tolerably secure results. But in the main its methods are metaphysical, resting on nothing but individual preconceptions, applying tests and private canons of interpretation which are purely arbitrary" (*Ibid.*, p. 28).

Fulfilment of predictions which, on any hypothesis, were then ages old. Was He mistaken in their character and quality?

In those last words I step, as I well know, upon a field of the most urgent controversy. What is the weight to be assigned to our ever blessed Lord's verdict upon the Old Testament as history and prophecy? It is now asserted, and by Christian men, that that verdict is not final; that He in the days of His flesh so submitted to human limitations that He was liable to mistakes of fact just as His best contemporaries were; that we adore Christ, and rely absolutely on Him, but it is on Christ not as He was but as He is, the glorified Christ. Here is an unspeakably overawing subject. I would not treat of it as if the question could be swept away in a sentence. But I do, as in our living Master's presence, venture to say that His witness to the nature and character of the Old Scriptures claims definitely to be *ex cathedrâ*. True, He doubtless spoke in this matter, as elsewhere, not in what may be called the technical style; not every reference of His to "Moses" need neces-

sarily mean to assert precisely that Moses wrote every clause of the Pentateuch. But the present question goes, as we have remembered, much deeper. It asks whether or no the Lord Jesus was altogether and in principle mistaken. He treated the Law, Prophets, and Psalms as a solid structure of historic fact and supernatural promise, divinely planned all through, divinely carried out and up from the foundation, and leading straight up to Himself. Was it all the time true that large parts of them were no more historical than the False Decretals on which the high Papal claims were built?[1]

If we revise the opinion of our Redeemer on this conspicuous point of His teaching, where shall we securely pause? Certainly we cannot *securely* trust, as oracular and final, His own predictions of things still future, at least in their details.

[1] I may remind the reader that about the middle of the ninth century there were published, by one Isidore, a collection of decisions and decrees, purporting to be by the earliest Bishops of Rome, all supporting the Papal claims as known in the Middle Ages. The collection was afterwards increased, and in the middle of the twelfth century engrafted into Gratian's *Decretum*, on which is based the Canon Law of the Roman Church. These documents are undoubtedly fabrications long after date.

One great utterance is often quoted as a confession that His conscious knowledge had limits; Mark xiii. 32. Quite true; but what sort of confession is it? It indicates in its very terms the vastness of His supernatural knowledge; asserting His cognizance of the fact that *the angels in heaven did not know* that day and hour. Such an avowal of nescience is an implicit assertion of an immeasurable insight.

And has He not, *as the glorified Christ*, thrown a light of affirmation on the "opinions" of the days of His flesh? The glorified Christ sent down the Paraclete. And the first and abiding work of the Paraclete was to illuminate the Apostles with a new understanding of the truth and glory of the Old Scriptures, altogether in the lines of their crucified Master's teaching about them. Unless indeed Resurrection, and Ascension, and Pentecost are themselves to melt into the haze of myth! The New Testament is as full of the supernatural as the Old.

Reverently and humbly, and with full recognition of a large place and lawful work for a true higher criticism in the literature of the Old Testament, and of the New, I yet decline

to think that our Lord's estimate of the nature of the Bible is not to be final for me, and that His reasonings from it are to be revised, while yet I adore Him as my Light, my Life, and my God. And I ask my Brethren to pause many times, and on their knees, before they think otherwise.

As regards prediction, let them look around them. Two great fulfilments of Old Testament prediction are going forward at this moment. One is, the vast work of missions, whose whole aim is to make known "to the ends of the earth" the Name of Messiah, Son of David, Son of Abraham, Son of God. The other is, the dispersion and yet permanence of the Jewish race, and (may I not add, in view of the facts of the last few years?) the beginnings of a re-population of Palestine by the Jews. Credible statistics assure us that they are now returning to their old land at the rate of many thousands in a year. True, no "miracle" brings them back. But no thoughtful student has ever said that the miracle of prediction demands miracle in the circumstances of the fulfilment.

I have gone beyond my intended length in these observations.[1] The present urgency of the subject, which encounters us everywhere, is my apology. But now, all the more gladly for the delay, I hasten to a few simple words of suggestion on that practical duty of Secret Bible Reading which is, after all, the best and surest antidote and preservative against scepticism about the Bible, if it is carried on at once thoroughly, intelligently, and as before the Lord. Vain without it, worse than vain,

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[1] have elsewhere called attention to the following among works helpful at present in the controversy about Scripture: Lord Hatherley's *Continuity of Scripture*, Dr Waller's *Authoritative Inspiration*, Dr Cave's *Inspiration of the Old Testament*. Let me add four able popular tractates: Cave's *Battle of the Standpoints* (Queen's Printers), Eckersley's *Historical Value of the Old Testament* (Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge), G. Carlyle's *Moses and the Prophets* and Seaver's *Authority of Christ* (Elliot Stock). Dr Liddon's memorable sermon, *The Worth of the Old Testament*, is full of helpful suggestions. See too Professor Leathes' *Witness of the Old Testament to Christ*, Sir J. W. Dawson's *Modern Science in Bible Lands*, and Bishop Harold Browne's *Messiah Foretold*. I specially call attention to Canon R. Girdlestone's recent book, the work of a master, *The Foundations of the Bible*, most temperate, judicial, solid, and establishing; and to this must be added now (1892) Bishop Ellicott's excellent Charge, published by the S.P.C.K. under the title *Christus Comprobator*.

will be the most diligent and successful study of the apologetics of the Bible. For the Bible was given to be, not a battle-field, but a field of wheat, and pasturage, and flowers, and a gold-field also all the while.

How then shall I read my Bible so as at once spiritually and mentally to know it, or rather, to be always getting to know it? The answer must be—"at sundry times and in divers manners." I must make time to read often, however brief each time may be. And I must use methods of study, more than one, in parallel lines.

As a sort of ground-work to all other methods I venture first to say, be always reading the Bible *through*, however slowly, or rapidly. For certain purposes, for instance in order to grasp the scope of a book, as perhaps an Epistle, or the Revelation, or St John's Gospel, or the latter half of Isaiah, or the Book of Genesis,[1] rapid reading may be quite reverently

[1] To touch on a very small point I write here "the Book of Genesis," not "the Book Genesis." English literature, if I do not mistake, is as unfamiliar with the latter phrase as it is with "the city London."

done. In any case, get as soon as you may, and as often as is practicable and practical, over *the whole surface*. Lord Hatherley, amidst the heavy occupations of a barrister's and judge's life, used to read the whole Book through carefully every year, and this for more than thirty years. I cannot say that I do the same. But I aim to read the Bible over carefully within every few years.

Then, practise what I would call the *plough-husbandry* of the Book. "Make long furrows." Investigate what the Scriptures have to say by topics, by doctrines, by leading words, over great breadths of their surface; keeping *that* subject, *that* word, all along in view. Bring all your mind to work that way, in the light of the Presence sought by prayer. An occasional special form of such study may be illustrated by that admirable book, written long ago, but full of life still, the late Professor Blunt's *Undesigned Coincidences*. I was thankful in my first days of ministry to be led to put in practice its examples and suggestions by ploughing in the field of the New Testament for the coincidences between the Gospel narrative and the

allusions to our blessed Lord's life scattered over the Epistles.

Then, practise also a diligent *spade-husbandry* in your Bible study. Dig as well as plough. In each narrow plot of the great field there are treasures hid. Dig a verse sometimes, using perhaps the spade of parallel references. Dig a paragraph at other times ; a chapter ; a short book. You are quite sure, under the blessing of the Master of the Field, to bring up rich results, more or less.

I will close my talk upon the Bible by offering a specimen of such spade-husbandry. A few years ago, at the Church Congress at Wakefield, I read a paper on Bible-reading. It mainly took the line of recommending earnestly the use of the Biblical student's "spade," and then it illustrated the recommendation by the following "spade-study" of the Epistle of St Paul to the Philippians; given here just as it was read.

"It has been laid on me to say a few words on the devotional study of the Holy Scriptures, taking some one Book of Scripture, and in some

sort exemplifying such study from it. I accept the theme, with a deep sense both of its opportuneness in our busy period, so full of temptations to the Christian Minister to postpone his Bible-study to other things, and of its sacred, paramount, vital importance. May our divine and sovereign Master be pleased to use my simple suggestions to call once more the attention especially of His ordained servants to the urgency of our need to be personal Bible-students before Him, and to the strength and joy that lies in such study, really pursued. He, in the days of His flesh, was the supreme Believer in the Bible, the supreme Lover, Student, Expositor, and Employer of the Bible. With the letter of the Bible He sustained Himself and quelled the Enemy in the Temptation, and the quotations He then selected suggest the minuteness of His study. Upon the written Word He spent the whole Easter afternoon. Accepted Sacrifice for Sin, Conqueror of Death, Lord and Head of Life, He had come that morning from the grave; and He came as it were holding the Scriptures in His hands.

"He found around Him in those earthly days a mass of religious popular opinions, and He spoke His holy mind freely against the false among them. But there was one opinion which He noticed only to sanction, to sanctify, to glorify. It was the opinion that the Scriptures were divine, were charged with the authority of God.

"I pray to Him, and trust Him, my Master and Lord, to hold me now humbly firm to the end, after many a struggle, in His opinion of the Holy Scriptures. I would enter into, as He abode in, their rest; therefore I accept, as He accepted, their yoke. I would feel what He felt, that living incitement to their study which is indissolubly bound up, if I mistake not, with the firm persuasion of their supernatural character and authority. I would read them, as He read them, above all things to act upon them in the life which we, His followers, have in Him; that life whose exercise and outcome means our whole walk here as well as hereafter. I would regard them, as it is apparent that He regarded them, as being (in a sacred sense) self-sufficient; not, indeed, to the self-

sufficient reader, but to the reader who prays in reverent simplicity that the Holy Spirit may dispel every moral mist, every hindrance of heart and will, from between him and the meaning of the written Word; and who intends in truthful sincerity to consent to, to obey, the discovered meaning; and who is taking pains over the Book.

"It is a great joy to know how entirely this was the view of the matter held, and loved, and taught in the ancient Church. Is there anything about which there is a larger consent of the Fathers? St Athanasius loves to dilate on the *αὐτάρκεια*, the self-sufficingness, of 'the divine Scriptures.' St Cyril of Jerusalem entreats his hearers to guide and fix their belief by the reading of the Canonical books. St Chrysostom boldly accounts for all mischiefs by the lack of personal acquaintance with the Scriptures.

"We are in the nineteenth century, almost in the twentieth, and perhaps we therefore need, even more than our elder brethren of the fourth, to renew our energies in Scripture-study by prayerful, painstaking recollection of

what the Book is. We need an ever fresh realization of what it is immortally, unalterably; the divinely trustworthy, and therefore authoritative, account of God's mind, and specially and above all of God's mind concerning Jesus Christ and our relations to Him, our life by Him, our peace, and power, and hope, in Him. And it is a few words about this aspect of Scripture, and the search of Scripture, that I now lay before you, with humility and simplicity of purpose, in the way of a description and example of a sort of study that has been a great blessing to myself.

"Take one of the holy Books, or a section of one of them; and for this purpose shorter is better. By a certain exercise of imagination suppose yourself to be reading a *newly-discovered* fragment of the apostolic age. Treat it somewhat as many of us have recently sought to treat Bryennius' discovery, *The Teaching of the Twelve Apostles*. What microscopic attention has been brought to bear upon that little book, just because good evidence gives it a place in the first century, and because it speaks of Christ, and of Christians; of faith, worship,

ministry, and life, in a part of the primeval Church! Now I attempt from time to time, reverently but very simply, to treat some inspired Epistle somewhat in the same way. I place myself before it as much as possible as if it were new to me and others. I seek, with something of the curiosity which such conditions would create, to collect and arrange its theology and its ethics. And then I bring in upon the results of my study the fact that it is God's Word, the Word which I am to embrace, and live upon, and act upon, to-day.

"For example and suggestion, let us turn to the EPISTLE TO THE PHILIPPIANS; few but golden pages, precious product of those two years of St Paul's physical imprisonment but blissful spiritual liberty. To stimulate our consciousness of what the Epistle contains to reward search, and search alone, let us try to place it before us as what it is not now, but once was, a newly-given oracle of God. It was once read for the first time, perhaps in the house of Lydia. Let it be to us, so far as thought can make it so, what it was then. And let us

remember all the while that it is really even now new, for it is immortal with the breath of the Spirit of God. It not only 'abideth,' but 'liveth,' for ever.

"Let us take two titles under which to classify the results of our inspection of this primitive Document. First, its doctrine of Christ; then, its doctrine of Christian Life. As a subordinate third title we may collect what it indicates of Christian life as exemplified in the Writer's allusions to his own experience.

"I.—The Christology of the Epistle.

"(1) We trace hints of the *human history* of Christ. He was man, in reality and in seeming; He died a death of suffering, the ii. 7, 8; iii. 10. death of the Cross; He rose again, for there is a power of His Resurrection; iii. 10. and, apparently, He so left this earth that it was known that an immeasurable exaltation attended His going, so that the ii. 9. heavens are now His seat, from which He is definitely expected to return. iii. 20.

"(2) Going back to antecedent and prehistoric matters of faith about Him, we find here that before He became man He subsisted

in possession, lawful and natural, of the mani-
ii. 6. fested reality (μορφὴ) of Godhead, equal to God. His appearance as man was the sequel of His own action of will in that
ii. 7. eternal state. It was a novel and voluntary assumption of the condition of the Bondservant, the Δοῦλος, of God. Antecedently possessing the μορφὴ of God, He now *de novo* 'took' the μορφὴ of a bondservant. What created beings in general are of course, God's bondservants, He had not been but now became; a fact as astonishing in its region as the fact of His possession of the Supreme Nature is in its region. He assumed this δουλεία, we find, because His essential work was to obey, to 'become obeying,' yes, to the
ii. 8. extent of death; which death was thus in Him altogether voluntary, part of a free undertaking to be not His own. The immediate result for Himself, it next appears, was an exaltation by God to supreme majesty under all these conditions. As being all this, possessor of Deity and accepter of bondservice, He was now *de novo* proclaimed as Κύριος, as Lord, in a sense interpreted by the adoration

of the universe; to the glory of God His Father. For it repeatedly appears ii. 11.
in the Epistle that God *is* His Father; He is the Son of God. Further, all 'the i. 2; ii. 11.
riches of God in glory' are 'in Him.' iv. 19.
It appears that in His exaltation He is embodied still, for it is to likeness to the body of His glory that the body of our humiliation is to be changed at His expected return. He is Almighty 'to subdue all things,' and iii. 21.
the subjugation is 'to Himself.'

"(3) As regards His relation to His followers, such is it that their whole life and every exercise of it is mysteriously but emphatically said to be IN HIM. He, the supreme Bond-servant, is to them (we continually read) absolute Lord. His grace animates their spirit. The divine Spirit ministered to them i. 2; iv. 23.
is His. Their 'fruit of righteous- i. 19.
ness' is generated and produced 'through' Him. He is evermore and profoundly near to them. Their heart-emotions are i. 11; iv. 5.
'in His heart.' To believe in Him i. 8.
is their essential characteristic. To i. 29.
suffer for Him is a special boon to them,

They live in expectation of His return, His day.

i. 6, 10; ii. 16; iii. 20.

"II.—The Epistle's account of Christian Life, inward and outward.

"We gather that the disciples are saints, ἅγιοι, separated from self and sin to God; brethren to one another; the true Israel, citizens of the City above.

i. 1, 14; iii. 3, 20; iv. 21.

Their being and life are so united to Christ, that they as Christians (and it is evidently assumed that this covers *everything* for them) exist, and are to act, 'in Him.' In Him, we find, they are 'saints' and 'brethren'; in Him they are to 'stand fast'; to be 'of one mind'; to 'receive one another'; to possess comfort, consolation; to glory; to rejoice. It is solemnly guaranteed, under certain most holy and happy conditions, that 'the peace of God Himself shall'—the promise is positive—'keep safe their hearts and thoughts in Him'; wonderful words, but perfectly distinct. In them God 'has begun a good work, to be carried for its completion up to the day of Christ'; and God is now 'working in them to will and to do for the sake of'

i. 1, 14; iv. 1, 2; ii. 29.

ii. 1; iii. 1, 3; iv. 4.

iv. 7.

i. 6; ii. 13.

His plan and purpose. It is laid upon them accordingly, in the profound inner rest of such union, such possession, such submission, to 'work out their salvation,' to live out their life as the saved, with the 'fear and trembling' of sacred reverence. They are 'to look ii. 12.
each not on his own things,' but on the things of others, in their Lord's manner; to ii. 4.
hold together in loving and courageous union for the Gospel, standing fast in 'one soul,' under the 'one Spirit's' power; to keep their i. 28.
place in the midst of evil surroundings as the 'children of God' and the 'light-bearers' of 'the message of life.' They are to abstain ii. 16.
totally, in the power of their life in Christ, from all sin, to 'do nothing' (I take all possible note of these '*alls*' and '*nothings*' as I study and classify) 'for strife or vainglory'; to be 'anxious ii. 3.
about nothing, but in everything' to tell God their desires; to 'do all things iv. 6; ii. 14.
without murmurings and disputings'; to be 'unblamable, unhurtful, unblemished, God's children,' not in a dreamland, but in the realities of Philippian life; to bear fruit, 'fruit ii. 15.
of righteousness, which is through Jesus Christ,'

and so to bear it that at last it shall turn out, in the day of the Lord, that they are 'filled' with
i. 11. it; every branch is laden. They are to let their 'moderation,' that is to say their yieldingness, their self-lessness, come out in common life, 'known to all men,' in the power
iv. 5. of a 'Lord at hand'; to fill their
iv. 8. thoughts with all that is good, straightforward, chastened, pure; to 'mind' the
iii. 20; ii. things in heaven; to have 'the mind of Christ'; to grow in spiritual perception, along
i. 9. with the growth of love; to live the life expressed in that profound summary, 'worshipping God in the Spirit (or, by the Spirit of God); exulting in Christ Jesus;
iii. 3. having no confidence in the flesh.'

"III.—The Life in Christ exemplified in the Writer.

"Here let us forget the Apostle, for he speaks wholly as the Christian, and in a way manifestly meant to be an instruction to all Christians. He appears, then, in our document,
iii. 12. as one whom Christ has 'seized,' has 'grasped'; as one who has discovered in Christ, and in Christ alone, the supreme Gain, the

supreme Object of knowledge, the supreme Spiritual Power as the Risen One, iii. 10.
the supreme Interest and Reason of i. 20; iii. 7-14.
life, the one possible supply of the unspeakable need of a valid Righteousness before the Judgment Seat. Yes, he must be 'found in Him, having the righteousness which is iii. 9.
from God on terms of faith,' the faith which enters into Christ. 'In Christ,' we discover, the Writer is, everywhere and always. His 'bonds' are 'in Christ'; his 'glory' is i. 13, 26.
'in Christ'; his hopes and trusts about the common events of life are 'in Christ'; in ii. 19, 24.
Christ he has 'found the secret' how to do all, all he has to do, in peace. Christ fills iv. 13.
his present life; when he dies, he will be so 'with Christ' that it will be 'far better' i. 21, 23.
than this present life, though it is full of Christ. He is the willing but most real bond- i. 1.
servant of Christ. His relations with Christ so fill him with peace and the power of peace, that extremely irritating rivalry and opposition at Rome does not irritate him, but occasions holy joy, and the suspense about life i. 12, etc.
and death in which Nero keeps him is powerless,

wholly because of Christ, to evoke anything but a statement of the dilemma of blessings which life and death in the Lord are to him. On the other hand, as the whole Epistle indicates, every pure human sensibility circulates naturally in this supernatural atmosphere. And meanwhile, though 'perfect,' in respect of reality of union and communication with his Lord, he is not yet 'perfected' in respect of application and results; the goal, the prize, is yet to come.

i. 21, etc.

E.g. ii. 27, 28; iv. 10.

iii. 12, 14.

"And so I shut my Epistle to the Philippians, leaving very much more in it for the next occasion. Such a study has not demanded long hours. It has asked only interest, purpose, and painstaking, a few such fragments of daily time as we must, yes, *must*, make and take for the Bible, if we are not to starve our people and ourselves. Suffer me to repeat it with deep earnestness; we must, we absolutely must, not merely devotionally read but devotionally search and penetrate this divine Book. And what shall come of the effort? By the grace of God, sought in the deep joy of a profound submission, it shall come that we shall

each one realize, with a vernal newness and delight, that Christ is mine; that the springs and secrets of this life in Him are mine, for the realities of my home, my parish, my study, my soul. I go (it is for each one of us to say it) with renewed thirst and certainty to Him the eternal Fountain; I live, I live, yet not I; and therefore I can work. It will be 'with fear and trembling,' as I know myself to be indeed in the eternal Presence; yet it will be also in the power-giving 'peace that passeth understanding, keeping the heart and thoughts, in Christ Jesus,' a keeping that is not meant to vanish outside holy places and holy hours, but to do its strongest and serenest work in the midst of crookedness and perverseness, under the stress of toils and burthens, as truly for me to-day as for the Philippians and their Teacher then."

'The Spirit breathes upon the Word
And brings the truth to sight;
Precepts and promises afford
A sanctifying light.

'My soul rejoices to pursue
The steps of Him I love,
Till glory breaks upon my view
In brighter worlds above."

COWPER.

CHAPTER IV.

THE DAILY WALK WITH OTHERS (i.).

When the watcher in the dark
Turns his lenses to the skies,
Suddenly the starry spark
Grows a world upon his eyes:
Be my life a lens, that I
So my Lord may magnify

CHAPTER IV.

THE DAILY WALK WITH OTHERS (i.).

WE come from the secrecies of the young Clergyman's life, from his walk alone with God in prayer and over His Word, to the subject of his common daily intercourse. Let us think together of some of the duties, opportunities, risks, and safeguards of the ordinary day's experience.

A word presents itself to be said at once, about the connexion between the secret and the common walk of the servant of God. The former is never to *give way to* the latter; it is to *run into* it, underground. "To walk with God *all day*" is to be our distinct and practical purpose, and not merely a sweet sentiment and holy aspiration of the hymn-book. The man who prays in secret is to be the man who knows

how to pray secretly in public. The man who pores over the Word all alone is to be the man who, out in the open field of life, "sins not" Ps. cxix. 11. because he has "hid that Word in his heart"; and who, being called upon by circumstances, however casually, to show himself actually a true "man of the Book," is internally ready to do so. Nothing short of "a life with Christ behind our work," always and everywhere, is to content us Pastors. To live that life is from one point of view our wonderful *privilege*, in our living union with our blessed Head. From another point of view it is our truest and deepest *work*, as we watch and pray over our privilege, and draw upon our Head in the holy diligence of faith.

I have spoken already of this vital connexion between the walk with God in secret and the secret walk with God in public. But it bears reiteration. It is something gained if we only remind one another, with the emphasis of repetition, that such a life is our bounden duty and our blissful possibility :—

"You may always be abiding, if you will, at Jesu's side;
In the secret of His Presence you may every moment hide."[1]

But now, what will be the surface and expression of such a hidden life, as the young Clergyman passes through his busy common day?

Let me speak first of his life indoors, that is to say, probably, in his lodgings. There the day at least begins and ends; and, in more ways than he is aware of till he sets himself to consider, he may—or may not—glorify his Master *there*. He is quite certain to be watched, whether the eyes are friendly or unfriendly to himself and to his message and ministry. He will be watched of course not only as a man but as a Minister. And the results of the observation may be most important, for good or for evil, to the immediate observers; and they are pretty sure to reach many other people through them. "What shall the harvest be?"

[1] I quote from a beautiful hymn, beginning, "In the secret of His Presence." It is given in part in several recent hymn-books, but for its complete form see *From India's Coral Strand*, (*Home Words* Office, Paternoster Buildings,) a collection of the poems of its gifted writer, a Hindoo Christian lady, Miss E. L. Goreh.

Let one result be, a clear impression in the house that you, the new Curate, are a man of SELF-RESPECT. Perhaps that *word* will not be used, any more than its Greek equivalent, αἰδὼς, that noble pre-Christian ethical term which lay ready and waiting to be glorified by the Gospel. But let Self-respect be your principle and your practice, and it will leave its impression, by whatever word the impression may be described. Let the man be seen by those who are about him, and who in one way or another wait on him, to be *quite simple while quite refined* in ways and habits; to be active and wholesome in the hours he keeps; to hold self-indulgence under a strong bridle (shall I say, not least the self-indulgence which cannot do without the stimulant and without *the pipe*?); and he will be in a fair way to commend his message indoors. Let him be seen, without the least affectation, but unmistakably, to find his main interests, within doors as well as without, in his Lord and His cause and work; to be the avowed Christian at all hours; and he will be doing hourly work for Christ. With it all, let him be seen to be "gentle to others"

while "to himself severe"; let him, while always self-respectful, be always watchfully CONSIDERATE; and his light will shine; he will be an Œcolampadius, a *House-light*, indeed.

On that last point I must dilate a little; on the point of Considerateness. I remember a conversation a few years ago with one of our college servants, an excellent Christian woman, truly exemplary in every duty. She was speaking of one of my dear student friends now labouring for the Lord in a distant and difficult mission-field, and giving him—after his departure from us—a tribute of most disinterested praise: "Ah, Sir, he *was* a consistent gentleman!" And then she instanced some of my friend's consistencies; and I observed that they all reduced themselves to one word—Considerateness. He was always taking trouble, and always saving trouble. He was always finding out how a little thought for others can save them much needless labour. The things in question were not heroic. The thoughtfulness for others concerned only such matters as the bath, and the shoes, and the clothes, and some

small details of hospitality. But they meant a very great deal for the hard-worked caretaker, and they were to her a means of quite distinct "edification," upbuilding, in the assurance that Christ and the Gospel are indeed practical realities. I break no confidence when I add, by the way, that my friend had not always been thus "a consistent gentleman." But the Lord had found him, and he had found the Lord, in the midst of his University life; and he had learnt most deeply and effectually, at the feet of Jesus, the consistency of Considerateness.

I do press this aspect of our daily walk with all earnestness on my younger Brethren. I press it on them at least *to think about it* with painstaking attention. No Christian man, as such, means for one moment to be selfish. But lack of attention does in very many cases indeed allow the real Christian to contract, or to continue, selfish habits. Many good men quite fail to realize how selfish, practically, it is to be unpunctual. You have your understood meal-times in your lodging. It may not be always possible to keep strictly to them; the exigencies

of work may make it honestly necessary now and again to be out of time. But let nothing less than duty do so for you. The breakfast kept standing because you are not up when you should be may very likely mean much needless trouble and much domestic disarrangement. Guests often brought in without any notice may mean the same.

Perhaps I need not say, yet I will say it, that the consistent servant of God, whether at his own table or at his neighbour's, will "take heed unto himself" not even to *seem* fastidious. There are some men about whom, if you know them, you feel sure that they will *not* choose the best dish at the table; and there are others, I am afraid, about whom you feel pretty sure that they will. One man will not think, or at least will not seem to think, whether the meat is hot or cold; and another will rather decidedly avoid the latter. Pardon the details; they have something very real to do with our Consistency.

And indeed we have need to ponder Consistency when we come to "the unruly member." It is not often, perhaps, that the risks of

the tongue are specially present in a bachelor's life in lodgings. But they are not absent there. Friends come in, and we will suppose that you and they are waited upon at your meal. What does the servant hear? Much talk about other and absent persons? Unkind or flippant criticisms? Idle, frivolous words? Very likely not, thank God; for we do want to remember our Lord. But let us take heed. Nothing is more conspicuously inconsistent in the Christian than needless, unloving discussion of the characters and lives of others; nothing is more keenly noticed when overheard; nothing more breaks the spell of influence for God.

"*Quisquis amat dictis absentum rodere vitam,*
Hanc mensam vetitam noverit esse sibi."[1]

Such was the memento which St Augustine had inscribed upon his dining-table. He found it necessary to remind the Bishops (*coëpiscopi*) whom he entertained not to misuse their ordained tongues. And the Pastors of the nineteenth century need it still, quite as much as it was needed in the fifth.

[1] Possidonius; *De Vitâ Augustini*, c. 22.

It is impossible, of course, to lay down exhaustive rules for the Christian guidance of conversation in detail. It is quite certain that the Gospel does not prescribe, or intend, that we should never speak except about things spiritual, or even except about our special duties in the Ministry. But it is quite certain too that the Gospel does prescribe inexorably the utmost watchfulness and self-discipline in the matter of the tongue, for all who name the Name of Christ. "For every idle word that men shall speak they shall give account"; "Let no corrupt communication proceed out of your mouth, but such as is good to the use of edifying, that it may minister grace unto the hearers"; "If any man among you seem to be devout (θρῆσκος), and bridleth not his tongue, that man's devoutness (θρησκεία) is vain"; "Set a watch, O Lord, before my lips."

Matt. xii. 36. Eph. iv. 29. Jas i. 26. Ps. cxli. 3.

I may say a few words in this connexion about the peculiar call for care and consistency where a group of young Clergymen live together in a "clergy-house." It seems to me that such groups must in the nature of the

case be *either* means of the greatest good in the mutual intercourse of their members, *or* just the opposite. As sure as *corruptio optimi est pessima*, so sure it is that the young Clergyman who is not consistent in temper, word, and habit, is the most unhelpful specimen of the young man; just because of the discord between his ministerial character and his personal. And if, say, three or four young servants of God (by profession) domicile together and are *not* consistent, I am afraid they will positively and actively draw one another, without in the least meaning to do so, away from the mind of Christ and the walk with God. Do they allow themselves to engage in trivial foolish, unkind talk? Do they so valiantly determine "not to be goody-goody" as tacitly to avoid all open-hearted, loving, reverent conversation about their Lord and His truth? Are they much fonder of endless argument than of the Word of God and prayer? Do their united devotions tend to be formal and perfunctory? Do they (I come back to that point again) "bridle not their tongues" about the absent, about those over them, about those

who differ from them? Then they are doing each other harm, at a rapid rate, by their collocation. On the other hand, are they each for himself living close to their Master and Friend in the secret chamber and in the inner heart? Are they walking humbly and gladly with their God, much in prayer, and having the Scriptures often open? And are they considering one another, to provoke unto love and to good works? Are they remembering generally and habitually the sacredness of the duty of mutual influence and example, in personal habits, and otherwise? Are they determined each for himself to help his brethren in all things pure, and just, and lovable, and of good report, and to strengthen them to endure hardness, and not to be ashamed of the blessed Name? Then they are blessing one another in Christ, as few men otherwise can do. But personal, individual consistency is the absolute requisite to this; each man must follow the Lord *for himself* in faith and fear.

I spoke just above of the sacredness of the duty of example. It is a theme on which I

entreat my younger Brethren very often to reflect, with self-scrutiny before their Master: I may be wrong, but I cannot help thinking that here is a duty which is decidedly less remembered now, among young Christian men, than it was in other days. With exceptions many and bright, I yet fear that there is a decline in this matter as a rule. That unhappy *individualism* which is the bane of our day, and which is the fatal enemy of all true and healthy *individuality*, breathes its malaria through even earnest Christian circles. In the formation or allowance of personal habits, in particular, it is sadly common to see young Christian men practically quite forgetful of the power and responsibility of example. I do not think that this was quite so common twenty or thirty years ago. Not that I wish to take up the futile part of a mere *laudator temporis acti*; I believe that the phenomenon has its reasons, its law so to speak, in the peculiar conditions of our day. But then the Christian man is never to be the slave of the conditions of his day, while he *is* to "serve his own generation by the will of God." So I appeal

Acts xiii. 36.

most urgently to my reader, if he should chance to need the friendly call, to awake to a renewed attention to the responsibility of example, and to watch accordingly over consistency in everything.

With the humblest reverence may I quote in this connexion the words of our blessed Lord in the High Priestly Prayer? "*For their sakes I sanctify Myself.*" So said JESUS CHRIST. Perfectly holy personally, He was yet always deliberately hallowing Himself, separating Himself, to the Father's will and work, "for their sakes"; because of His relations with His disciples. Shall not we sinners, at whatever interval, yet really, "follow His steps" in this also? "For their sakes," for the sake of our brethren in the Ministry, for the sake of our servants, for the sake of our neighbour of all sorts and kinds, let us "sanctify ourselves" in a daily, willing separation from the way of self to the will of God, diligently seeking the expression of that will in His holy Word. It is the duty of every Christian. It is *par excellence* the duty of every Christian Minister, from the oldest Archbishop to the

John xvii. 19.

youngest Deacon. To take Orders is to renounce all ideas of a selfishly *private* life. Our whole life henceforth is "for their sakes"; even in those parts of it which must, from another point of view, be most jealously protected from officialism, and lived as if for the time no one existed but the man and his God. We are emphatically now "their bondmen for
2 Cor. iv. 5. Jesus' sake." "Others" have now an indefeasible right not only to our ministry of Ordinances, and to our preaching, and our visiting, but to the example of our habits, of our lives.

Following up the same line of remark, let me say a word about our duty to others in the matter of *manner*. It is sometimes, surely, forgotten by Christian men that they have no right to be careless of their manner. Many an excellent and otherwise consistent Clergyman seems to assume that, whether with his brethren or with his parish neighbours, his manner may take care of itself, if he only "does not mean it." But well-meaning is a poor substitute for well-doing; especially that otiose sort of well-meaning which only means not meaning ill.

Christians have no business with so poor and thin a phantom of virtue. They are not at liberty not to think about a kindly courtesy of address, and a manly deference towards elders, and watchful "honour" given to woman, and a *manifested* (as well as felt) sympathy of heart with all who ask it. They are forbidden by the whole will and rights of their Master to be loud and "casual" in intercourse; to be moody and uncertain; to be difficult to please, easy to offend; to think it a small thing to speak the word to others which may wound, even lightly, with any wound but the really "faithful" one of a loving caution or reproof in Christ. No one is to be so independent in one aspect as the Christian man, and particularly the Christian Minister. Few men have so strong a vantage-ground for independence as the Clergyman of the English national Church. But it is the sort of independence which carries also the deepest obligation, the strongest sort of *noblesse oblige*. It is "for their sakes." And so the same man is bound to be also the most accessible, the most attentive, the most courteous and sympathetic. Avoid-

1 Pet. iii. 7.

ing carefully, of course, all affectation and unreality, he is to take care that a Christian reality within does show itself in a Christian manner without. "Let your moderation, your
Phil. iv. 5. oblivion of self, be *known unto all men*." Let it be seen and felt, in your rooms, in your parish, in your church.

Obviously this takes for granted the Clergy-
Prov. xvi. 32. man's recognition of the call to "rule his spirit." The temptation not to do so is very different for different men. One man finds temper and patience sorely tried by things which do not even attract the attention of another. But very few men indeed, in the actual experiences of pastoral life, whether in town or country, quite escape for long together the stings which irritate and inflame. But they *must* learn how to meet them in peace and patience, unless they would take one of the most certain ways to dishonour their Master and discredit their message. The world has some very true instincts about the power of the Gospel, as it ought to be, as it claims to be. And one of them is that a Christian as such is a man who ought always to keep his temper.

The Christian Clergyman is most certainly, at least in an ironical sense, "expected" never to be *personally* vexed and hot. Will it be so? Will he take ignorant rudeness pleasantly, should it cross his way? Will he meet opposition patiently, however firmly? Will he show that he remembers the text, "The bondservant of the Lord must not strive"? 2 Tim. ii. 24.

That text was the watchword of a great man of God, the Rev. Charles Simeon, in the early and exquisitely trying experiences of his long ministry (1782—1836) at Trinity Church, Cambridge. The parishioners shut their house-doors in his face, and locked their pew-doors against those who came to hear him. Every form of irritating parochial obstruction was employed. And the young Clergyman had by nature a very short temper, and a very fearless spirit. But he had found peace through the blood of the Cross a few years before, and the interests of his Saviour were become all in all to him. So his first thought was, what would best commend Jesus Christ to the angry people? And the words seemed to sound

constantly in his soul, by way of answer, "The servant of the Lord must not strive." Never was tried patience more beautifully made perfect. He was always giving way, and always going on. He carefully ascertained that it was illegal to lock the pew-doors; but he *did not take the law* of those who locked them. His soul was kept in peace; and by degrees, as might be expected, a calmness which clearly was not cowardice but consistency won a victory whose effects are felt to this day through the whole Church of England in the results of Simeon's mighty influence.[1]

How shall we, in our measure, whenever called to it, "not strive," but "let our oblivion of self be known unto all men"—in the cottage, in the villa, in the vestry? There is only one way. It is by abiding in the Secret of the Presence, in the "pavilion where "the strife of tongues" may be heard indeed, but cannot, *no, cannot*, set the hearer on fire. We must claim on our knees, very often, our Master's

[1] I may be permitted to refer to my brief sketch of Mr. Simeon's Life: *Charles Simeon* (Methuen, 1892), ch. iv.

power to keep the soul which He has made, and which longs to manifest Him

> "In faith, in meekness, love,
> In every beauteous grace,
> From glory thus to glory changed
> As we behold His face."

I have inevitably touched only some parts of the great subject of personal ministerial Consistency. More will be said later. But the treatment on paper, at almost any length, must be incomplete at the best; many an important side of the subject will need to be omitted. My aim has been, and will be, to speak of those sides most, if not only, which are in special danger of neglect at the present day; and this means of course the passing by of some large topics.

But contributions, however fragmentary, to the study of Consistency will not be in vain. "A Minister's life is the life of his ministry," says some one of other days with pithy force. "Happy those labourers of the Church," says blessed Quesnel, the Jansenist (on Mark vi. 33), "the sweet odour of whose lives draws the people to Jesus Christ." We all recognize the

beauty and truth of such sayings. We all admit the fitness and duty of Consistency. But we must also recollect that in order to our consistency there is needed more than an abstract approbation; we must attend, we must reflect, we must examine ourselves, we must discipline ourselves, as those who aim at an object at once lovely and necessary. Above all, we must
Ps. cxix. 133. "order our steps in our Lord's Word," and we must maintain a living communion of spirit with our Lord Himself, who is not only our Exemplar, our Law, and our King, but also our Secret, our Strength, our Life.

CHAPTER V.

THE DAILY WALK WITH OTHERS (ii.).

If Jesus Christ thou serve, take heed,
Whate'er the hour may be;
His brethren are obliged indeed
By their nobility.

CHAPTER V.

THE DAILY WALK WITH OTHERS (ii.).

IN the present chapter I follow the general principles of the last into some further details. And I place before me as a sort of motto those twice-repeated words of the Apostle, TAKE HEED UNTO THYSELF.

These words, it will be remembered, are addressed in both places to the Christian Minister. At Miletus St Paul gathers round him the Presbyters of Ephesus, and implores them to take heed to themselves, and to the flock. A few years later he writes to Timothy, commissioned (whether permanently or not) to be Pastor of Pastors in that same Ephesus, and lays it on his soul to take heed to himself, and to the doctrine. In each case the appeal to attend to "self" comes first, as the vitalpreliminary to the other. And in each

Acts xx. 28; 1 Tim. iv. 6.

case it takes the form of a solemn warning; not only "remember" but "TAKE HEED."

I have already tried to emphasize the duty of "heed-taking," in several directions. But I come in this chapter to some important matters which seem specially to fall under such a heading; matters in which the lack of prayerful heed may, and often does, work great and even fatal mischief in the lives of Clergymen.

i. Let me first say a little, in brotherly confidence and candour, about the young Clergyman's *relations with Woman* in ordinary intercourse.

It would be waste of words to talk about the delicacy of the subject; it is self-evident. And it is obvious also that in a book like this the subject can be treated only in the way of general suggestion; no vain attempt shall I make to state and discuss possible exceptional cases of social difficulty. But it is quite necessary to say something on this matter, for it is indeed a pressing and important thing in ministerial life.

I will begin, then, with the assumption that the young Clergyman recognizes, and seeks to

practise, the great Gospel principle of a sanctified chivalry. "To the feminine vessel, as to the weaker, give honour," writes St Peter; words which must be cut large and deep into our ministerial hearts if we are to live as true Ministers and true men. They have a particular reference to married life, I know; but their full scope is far wider. And they are among the most wonderful utterances of the apostolic Gospel, when we read them in the light, or rather under the contrasted darkness, of the contemporary *anti*-chivalry of the Rabbinic teaching about woman. They are the utterance of Peter, the married man, after his discipleship in the Spirit at the feet of Jesus, the Mother's Son. "*Giving honour;*" do not forget the phrase. It lifts us into a higher and far healthier region than that of either mere fondness or mere admiration. Indeed, it is all-important to remember what a deep gulph lies between two things which at first sight may be mistaken for one another—Admiration for Women, Reverence for Woman.

1 Pet. iii. 7.

So let apostolic chivalry, unaffected, but watchful and practical, govern your life, by the

grace of God. Let it be quite impartial as a principle. You may possibly have to speak with a princess; you are sure to have to speak and deal with very poor and ignorant women. But each and all they are WOMAN, and you must remember the Apostle's word. Courtesy and consideration are due to them all, as you are a man, a Christian, a Minister of God. The expression may vary, and within limits it must, but the principle must be always there. To the poorest woman give the wall in the street, offer the best seat in the train.

I must here so far anticipate a future chapter as to point out how constantly this call to "give honour" must be remembered in pastoral visitation. We Clergy are *trusted* to an extraordinary degree in personal intercourse with female parishioners. How often a pastoral call is paid, whether at mansion or cottage, when no man is at home! "Take heed unto thyself" *then.* The call under those circumstances should be as brief as possible. And the whole interview should be ruled by a heedful while unobtrusive respect and self-respect. Do not

think a strong word of caution in this matter out of place and out of scale. Carelessness of even appearances here may wreck a life; it may certainly blight an influence.

But I do not forget that we are not yet concerned directly with pastoral visitation as such; we are thinking of incidental social intercourse. The young Clergyman will sometimes, however seldom, find himself visiting in not exactly the pastoral sense of the word. Courteous hospitality will be shown him by neighbours; and while he will very often decline these calls, because his Master's work in other and more obvious forms claims him, sometimes he will accept them, as his Master did. Or his needful holiday has come, and he is staying at a friend's house, or is thrown into new intercourse at some health-resort. And we will suppose that he is a bachelor, and not engaged. In what particular directions shall he take heed?

Below and above all details, he will take heed to remember his always present Lord and Friend, and to live and talk as knowing that "HE is the unseen Listener to every conversa-

tion"; a recollection which ought to banish from our talk, whether we talk with man or woman, alike frivolity, unkindness, untruthfulness, and dulness. Then, to come to a few details under that great principle—the man will need to watch and be heedful in one or more quite different directions, according to his character. And God grant us all such honesty and simplicity before Him as shall teach us to know at least something of our own characters, especially in their weak points. There ought to be no surer prescription for a true γνῶθι σεαυτόν than to

1 John i. 7. "walk in the light" of the presence of Him who sees everything just as it is, and in that light to look at ourselves, and the world, and His Word; aiming every day, not to be thought "nice," or to be thought remarkable, but to let Him shine out of our lives.

One man, then, will need more than another to cultivate a quiet reserve and restraint of manner in social intercourse with young ladies. It is the way of some men, without thinking about it, to be too demonstratively attentive. It is the way of others to forget that they are not everywhere at home, and to be far too

familiarly friendly. "I look on every girl I meet as if she were my sister;" so said one young Clergyman, a very fine fellow indeed, but certainly in this sentiment very much and very dangerously mistaken. Attentions and confidences may be meant as honestly as possible. But if they go beyond a certain line (soon reached) they may most naturally be thought to mean something more; to be a preliminary, however distant, to an offer. And just possibly such a thought may not be unwelcome to the other person concerned. And if so, and if all the while nothing but courtesy was meant, you, my friend and Brother, without knowing it, perhaps without ever knowing it, may *spoil the life* of one who cannot possibly, as a woman, express herself to you. I have known such a case in clerical life. The man was a true man, but he allowed himself, for the pleasantness of it, to be very agreeable where he meant no more than friendship. Great, while silent, was the sorrow that resulted. Take heed unto thyself.

There are some parochial circumstances where even unusual caution is needed in this

direction; for reasons which I allude to with pain. It is a fact, I fear, that in some parishes the Curate is in danger of being rather actively pursued, by here and there a parent, as a possibly desirable son-in-law. I have even heard of a certain Incumbent who was given not indistinctly to understand that the coming Curate would be less welcome if he was a man already married. Such a state of things is of course one of exceptional social risk and difficulty for a Curate, and for a young single Rector or Vicar still more so. Nothing will do but a very real "heed-taking," beginning always in secret with God, and then quietly carried out with sanctified common-sense. Fatal mistakes, really fatal to future usefulness in the Ministry, may very easily be made otherwise.

But then there is an opposite side to the question. Some young men, not all certainly but a good many, are in great danger of a rather exaggerated estimate of their own attractions and importance. There are some junior Clergymen who are, if I do not mistake, prone to think that most young ladies whom they meet are fascinated by them, or are at least in

imminent peril. Such delusions meet sometimes with not very gentle corrections. But it is better to be forearmed against the delusion —as it most probably *is* a delusion in the given case. And the best prophylactic is the old one; a secret walk with God "in the light," and a recollection of the constant need of self-knowledge exactly where such knowledge is least pleasant. I repeat it; may the Lord grant us each and every one His true *γνῶθι σεαυτόν*. By a blessed paradox it is sure to prove the secret of a true self-oblivion; for it means for certain, among other things, a truer and fuller sight of HIM.

The subject thus before us is a very large one. It connects itself with the whole question whether marriage or celibacy is the will of God in the man's ministerial life. Happily I have no need, in the Church of England, to defend "the holy estate of matrimony" as if it were in the slightest measure incompatible with the fullest sanctification of life and of ministry. Personally my belief is that, in the immense majority of cases, the married Clergyman is the more useful Clergyman *if* (an "if" of

extreme importance) his wife is *altogether one with him in the Lord.* But I distinctly think that there are very many exceptions to the matrimonial rule. There are branches of ministerial work, particularly in parts of the sacred *missionary* field, where the single man seems to make the better Minister. And no true servant of God will allow himself to think first of an opening for marriage and then of an opening for ministry.

Here I pause to say what it lies much on my heart to say somewhere. Let the true man, who is at present free in respect of marriage-engagements, resolve that in the whole question of seeking or not seeking a wife he will consider first, midst, and last his Master's work, his Master's Ministry. Better a thousand times be the most solitary of human beings than choose with your eyes open a married life in which you will not find positive help (not merely no positive hindrance) in your work for the Lord Jesus Christ. Beware of the temptation to seek the mere pretty face, or the mere fortune large or small, or mere accomplishments, or indeed anything short of

the truly converted believing heart and dedicated will. The Clergyman and his Wife are sacredly bound to live their united life wholly for Christ. They are to help one another on in Him, to stimulate one another in work for others in Him, to give each other always mutual aid towards a constant growth in faith, hope, and love; towards an ever better use of means, and time, and tongue, and everything. If their Lord gives them children to train for Him, those children are to see their parents so living, not only individually but together, as to glorify and commend the Gospel *to them*, from the very first. And the wider family of the parish, sure to be observant, is to see the same sight in measure. Happy the married Pastor whose home and its life respond to such a description. Alas for the man whose passion, blindness, hurry, self-will, or whatever else it is, has betrayed him into a condition of things which cannot be so described.

I may be writing for some readers to whom such a "take heed unto thyself" may be in point even as they read. If so, let me seize the occasion. With not a few very sorrowful

illustrations in my mind I lay all emphasis on this earnest word of affectionate warning. And let me add to it another word, as in duty bound, and with the utmost solemnity, knowing that the thing is vitally important. I appeal to you not lightly to seek marriage, not lightly to make engagement, even where you have good assurance that all would be spiritually well, if there is a real probability of a married life *clogged with pecuniary perplexities.*

You observe that I do not speak absolutely on this point; I dare not. I do not say, Do not do it; I say, Do not *lightly* do it. Faith is one thing; "light-heartedness" is another. And sometimes light-heartedness means nothing better than a vague expectation that "something will turn up." Perhaps what does turn up is a weary and distracting struggle with debt, and a gradual habituation to a not very creditable life upon the means of others, who very likely can spare only with difficulty what comes at length to be taken without gratitude. I beseech my Brother to "suffer the word of exhortation."

ii. I touch thus already on the second

point about which I would fain cry, Take heed unto thyself. That matter is *Money*. A few words here will sufficiently convey my appeal, but those few must be pressing. I appeal to my younger Brethren to be watchful day by day in the matter of money. At this moment there rises in my memory the face and name of a Clergyman with whom, long years ago, I became acquainted about the time of his ordination. He was unquestionably in earnest; I believe that he truly knew his Lord and Master, and was truly desirous to serve Him in His flock. But I am perfectly sure that he must have forgotten, almost from the first, to take heed unto himself in the matter of money. Perhaps he had brought with him from the University that fatal habit of *pecuniary intemperance* which sometimes gets a hold upon a man second in its grasp only to that of intemperance commonly so called. Unhappily the ways of modern college life too easily generate such a habit, as University men are led more and more by their surroundings into a dread of appearing to be poor, and are almost expected to cost their fathers more for the

academical year of eight or nine months than they will earn in the clerical year of twelve. But however it was, my poor dear friend *had* about him the tendency to debt. And not all his earnestness and his devoutness could maintain his influence when that tendency began to tell. One post of duty had to be soon quitted for another, and so again and again, under this ever-recurring failure. Let us take heed unto ourselves.

In dealing with money which in any sense is public, no care can be too great. In a case well known to me, a Clergyman imperilled his whole influence, to the verge of ruin, by the simple but effectual process of allowing money collected for a church-object to be mixed and "muddled" with his private funds. He was not business-like, and he was not at all well off. And somehow, when the time of reckoning came, the money had melted, he knew not whither. Strenuous exertions on the part of friends replaced privately the missing collection; but it was only just in time. I have often heard our Indian Missionaries say how great and frequent is the difficulty raised by

the apparent incapacity of some otherwise excellent native Pastors to keep public and private money apart. They mean all that is honourable; but a friend comes in begging for a loan, and there is the church fund at hand, and of course the sum taken shall be soon repaid, and of course it is *not* repaid. But such difficulties are not confined to India. The native Pastors of England have great need to take heed unto themselves.

If possible, let us make our lay parochial friends our secretaries, and above all our treasurers. But if it must be otherwise, and often it must be, let us take heed, at any cost of pains. To do so may be overruled to win a positive influence for the Clergyman. I well remember a dear friend of mine telling me, with loyal pleasure, of his holy and devoted Vicar's care in this direction, and its power over the keen-sighted and not always friendly members of the school-committee in his great parish. Every item of the books was accurate; every halfpenny of receipts accounted for. Men could find no fault in that Clergyman save concerning the Law—and the Gospel—of his God.

Perhaps I need only allude in passing to that crude sort of temptation put so freely before us Clergy, the circular advertisement of the mine which is to pay twenty per cent., or of the company just formed (I have such a circular in my possession, and keep it sacredly,) to promote the construction of a new projectile which shall make war more horrible than ever ; one condition to the success of the Clergyman's investment being, of course, that war, thus made more horrible than ever, shall also be as frequent and continuous as possible. But the schemes announced in these circulars are very various in character ; good, indifferent, and bad. Need I say that, as a very safe rule, they must all be viewed as bad from the point of view of the young Clergyman's (or indeed of the Clergyman's) purse ? It is a truism to remark that high interest means low security ; but even a truism can bear occasional repetition when it has to do with a good man's whole life and work, and when the oblivion may mean acute or chronic misery. Such investments are for us a form of gambling, almost as much so as

the shameless circulars which we sometimes receive from foreign cities, announcing the possibility of clearing a fortune at one stroke by a turn of the lottery machine. Does the sending of such missives to the English Clergy mean that English Clergymen sometimes answer them? If so, I say that it is strictly impossible that the man who so answers, whether he loses or wins, can also be walking with God, and so working that the Lord works with him. So far as such acts go, he is acting an awfully untrue part, and his Master knows it. Let us take heed unto ourselves.

In conclusion, I turn another way. The whole question of the increase and investment of money is a very solemn and searching one for the Christian, clerical or lay. There are holy men who say that we ought in no degree to "lay up." While I reverence their meaning, I do not agree with them. Yet I do most deeply feel that their warnings raise a danger-signal in a direction opposite to that which we have been viewing, but equally important. Some of my younger Brethren have already a private competency; others

may be expecting one. To others, gifted in one way or another for marked acceptance in the Church, posts are, or will be, offered which even in these days bring a good income, perhaps a growing one. Take heed unto thyself. It is with deep significance that the Word of God bids us not set our heart upon riches *when they increase*. It is often observed, I fear, that a man's readiness to give diminishes in proportion to his power for giving. There is a subtle fascination for many minds, and among them for minds generous at first, in an access of possessions; the thirst for more sets in, however imperceptibly, and perhaps the Christian, perhaps the Pastor, has become—before he knows it—covetous; caring a good deal for money. Let us take heed unto ourselves.[1]

Ps. lxii. 10.

[1] I cannot help relating a pathetically amusing remark I once heard in a Dorsetshire cottage. I had looked in on the good housewife in the course of a long walk, and she was telling me about the needs and straits of a recent time of illness. The aged Vicar of the large and thinly-peopled parish was a well-to-do man, and not at all unkind in meaning and manner. But he never gave alms, or indeed material help of any kind. "Poor Mr ——," said the cottager, with the kindliest *naïveté*, "he never *do* give away anything. There, *I suppose it be his affliction.*"

I am sure that the Gospel has no censure for modest comforts and for simple refinements. I am sure that it bids the Christian, whether Pastor or not, "*provide*," look before- 1 Tim. v. 8.
hand, with a view to save needless anxiety and disadvantage both for himself and yet more "for them of his own house." But I am equally sure that it commands us even more emphatically not to lay up treasure upon earth; not to make the sad mistake of thinking that the work of life is to get. Rather may ours be the spirit of a noble-hearted friend of mine, now at rest for ever, early called away from heroic Missionary work. He had found himself rapidly getting richer in a successful school-enterprize; and recognized *in this* a summons to give it up, and volunteer for the foreign field.

But I say no more. Probably to the great majority of my readers these last paragraphs seem little to the purpose, at least at present. But there are few lives in which, sooner *or later*, such reflections may not find a corner for application.

Meanwhile, whether our call is to avoid

debt or to avoid gathering, we will look up for new motive power into our Master's face. Him we love; Him we long to commend; and to Him we belong with all we have. In His Name, and for His sake, we will take heed unto ourselves.

CHAPTER VI.

THE DAILY WALK WITH OTHERS (iii.).

Thrice happy they who at Thy side,
Thou Child of Nazareth,
Have learnt to give their struggling pride
Into Thy hands to death:
If thus indeed we lay us low,
Thou wilt exalt us o'er the foe;
And let the exaltation be
That we are lost in Thee.

CHAPTER VI.

THE DAILY WALK WITH OTHERS (iii.).

LET me say a little on a subject which, like the last, is one of some delicacy and difficulty, though its problems are of a very different kind. It is, the relation between the Curate and his Incumbent; or more particularly, the Curate's position and conduct with regard to the Incumbent.

I need not explain that the legal aspect of this important matter is not in my view. Not long ago I listened, in the library of Ridley Hall, to an instructive lecture, by a diocesan Chancellor, on the law of Curates; one of a series on Church Law delivered under the sanction of the University. The Lecturer informed the audience, certainly he informed me, of many points of practical moment not clearly known to us before. He gave a sketch of the history

of the licensed Curate as an institution, and made us aware that he is a modern institution, comparatively speaking. Before the Reformation the numerous host of "chantry-priests" was largely used to supplement the offices of the parochial Clergy. After the Reformation, for a very long while, the pastoral arrangements did not include a special institution of Assistants. Then, as the unhappy system of pluralities grew large and common, such as it was all through the eighteenth century and beyond it, "the Curate" meant not the active assistant of the resident Pastor but the substitute for the non-resident—the Curate-in-Charge. It was not till well within these last hundred years that men were commonly to be found doing what we now understand so well as Assistant-Curates' work. The presence in the Church of us Assistant-Curates (I hold a licence myself, and am therefore one of the company) is at once an effect and a sign both of the great increase of population and of the concurrent increase throughout the Church of England of the desire for fuller and more laborious ministrations.

So our able Lecturer led us through our own history; and then he proceeded to instruct us in some main elements of our legal qualifications, and duties, and rights: how to get into a Curacy, and how to get out of it; what are the Bishop's rights over the Curate, and how the Archbishop may interpose if the Curate pleads a grievance against the Bishop. But I trust that this and other Lectures of the same course may see the light some day in a better form than a rough and passing report of mine. My purpose in referring to them now is that I may call attention to one point on which the Lecturer laid no little stress. It was, that it is the wisdom of the Curate, when he has once deliberately accepted a Curacy, to be thoroughly loyal all along; to consider himself as "at the Vicar's beck and call"; to serve him heartily and unreservedly. If tempted to do otherwise, particularly if tempted to complain of the Vicar to the Bishop, let him resist that temptation to the utmost of his power. "There may be sad exceptions, and necessity knows no law; but *as a rule*," said my honoured friend, "I may

assure you, from a large experience, that the Curate who complains of his Incumbent to his Bishop injures not the Incumbent but himself."

Our Lecturer avowedly spoke not as a spiritual but as a legal counsellor. I would now take up his words, and from the point of view of the friend and Brother in the Lord say a little to my younger Brethren, engaged or about to be engaged in assistant Curacies, concerning the Christian rightness and Christian wisdom of taking the sort of line which the diocesan Chancellor recommended.

As I come to the subject, let me say on the threshold that I am sure to be writing for many readers who little need the discourse, at least at present. You are working under a Vicar or a Rector whose example and also whose friendship is one of the greatest blessings of your life. You see in him a man perhaps much older than yourself, perhaps nearly your coeval, but however a leader, who is also, in the Lord Jesus Christ, your brother, and your most considerate while stimulating friend. He consults you, without forgetting his responsibility of

ultimate direction. He gladly and fully recognizes and honours your work done under his organization. He has not the slightest wish to come between you and the affections of his parishioners among whom you move. He cultivates, in his busy life, Christian fellowship with you in private; you pray together, and talk together, not only about the parish but about the Lord, and the Word, and your own souls. He lets you find in him, as he is glad to find in you, just a man, a friend, a Christian, with trials and blessings of inner experience on which it is sometimes good to speak to one another; a living soul, com panionable and human, while in it Christ dwells by faith. You have experienced with happy uniformity your Incumbent's patience, sympathy, fairness, trustworthiness. You have seen in him one who is himself always at work, always watching for the flock; who does not put on you this duty or that merely because it is irksome to himself, but whose whole purposes are in the cause of God, and who distributes labour in any and every interest but his own.

And perhaps you see this man honoured and loved by all around you, as they too see and know him to be what he is. You move about in the parish, and you are quite sure to hear allusions to the Vicar. And as a rule, perhaps, they are all friendly, all loyal, all grateful. You find yourself, in short, under no appreciable present temptation, being (as of course you are) a true man yourself, to do anything but identify yourself very gladly with him.

But then, even in this bright supposed case —a case of which the Church of England contains hundreds of practical examples, thank God—appreciable temptations in the other direction, the wrong, unhappy, fatal direction, may very conceivably creep upon you with time. Your admirable Incumbent is all the while a mortal man, and as such, most certainly (he himself above all men knows and owns it), he is not perfect, not quite equal to himself in every way. Perhaps he has come to be not perfect in physical health, and thus he is obliged, to his own grief, to do less in this or that branch of activity than some of his

people think he ought to do; and then you are tolerably sure to hear some not very just and generous complaints in the parish. Perhaps domestic sorrow, or domestic straits and care, may have come in to becloud his spirit and to make his energies for a season flag. Perhaps among his many gifts you may find some gift a little lacking; he may be manifestly less strong in the committee, or in the labours of arrangement generally, than in the pulpit or the class; or it may be just the other way. And you, my dear friend, may be (or may think yourself to be) somewhat strong where he is somewhat weak; an opportunity for many subtle temptations. The days and weeks go on; and if you let "the little rift" of criticism widen, and do not continually take it to your Lord to be examined and mended, other feelings—not born from above—may steal in between you and this good man, your elder and leader in Christ. Petty dislikes and impatience may rise in your heart about some trifling point of manner, some momentary failure of sympathy, some oblivion of arrangement or engagement due to a sore stress

of work, some very small matter of Church order, or Christian dialect; or who can tell what?

But also it is just possible that I am writing for some reader who finds himself in more grave and pressing difficulties than these. My most honoured brethren the Incumbents, if any of them should cast their eyes over these chapters, written by a Curate mainly for Curates, will not blame me for saying that there are cases, sad and sorrowful, where the Curate cannot honestly think with perfect happiness of his leader's work and influence. Perhaps that Incumbent has "run well," nobly well, but (as it was of old with some primitive saints) something or someone "hindered him." Perhaps he has lost first love and zeal, and sunk, he knows not how, into an indolent clericalism, or anticlericalism, of thought and habit. Perhaps he has suffered care, disappointment, parochial conflicts, to sour his spirit, or at least to take his heart away from his people. Perhaps he has felt the sad influence of controversial battles, and the love and richness of the old Gospel has

Gal. v. 7.

somewhat faded out of his life, and conversation, and sermons; I do not refer to faithful care over distinctive and world-offending truth, but to the controversial *spirit*, which is altogether another thing. Perhaps he has somewhat lost command over temper; perhaps he has not yet found in our Lord's great fulness the open secret by which He supplies patience to His servants, even when they are sorely vexed by man. And just possibly difficulty between Curate and Vicar threatens to arise from some side-quarter; from those who stand around the Vicar, who inevitably see him often and intimately, who are active and important under-workers in his field, and who may themselves be not quite fully "governed by the Spirit and Word of God."

I have put a good many supposed cases. How much I should rejoice if I could know that not one reader of this page could find any of my "peradventures" the least in point within his experience. But I must emphasize one of them which is hardly a peradventure at all; namely that the Curate is practically certain, sooner or later, to find temptations

presented to his loyalty by the conversation of parishioners. There is not one parish in all England where everybody is pleased with the Incumbent; pleased always and about everything. And if the given Vicar or Rector employs a Curate, and if that Curate is you, it will be a moral miracle if you never hear of such discontents You will hear of them, very probably, in ways which will offer you, however faintly, an opportunity of acting to-
2 Sam. xv. 1-6. wards your chief a little as Absalom acted towards David when he expressed certain pious wishes that *he* were made judge in the land in his father's place. I do not for a moment mean that you are, or ever will be, a man of treacherous *purposes*; the Lord forbid. But if you do not watch, and are not in some measure forewarned, you may easily be betrayed unawares, quite unawares, into speech or into action which will practically be treacherous to the man who is over you in Christ, and so toward Christ's work and cause in the parish where you serve. Do you not know the possibilities to which I refer? Have they not crossed either your own path or that

of some Curate-friend of yours? Is there no such thing as an intimacy formed by the Curate in some house where the Incumbent is not liked, and is that intimacy never used by the Curate *not* for the noblest ends? Is there no weak listening to parochial gossip on the Curate's part? Is there never any allowance by the younger man of a growth around him, in ways which he could stop summarily, if he tried, of a certain unwholesome sort of preference and popularity? Is it not sometimes known that a Curate condescends so low as to concur with criticisms or sarcasms on his chief, or even to volunteer them? Alas for the parish where there is a "Curate's party," small or more extensive. Happy the parish where no chance is given in that direction by either Incumbent or Curate. Happy the Curate who is so truly loyal and dutiful, it may be even under difficulties, that he makes it quite unmistakable that, if a party is to gather, it must gather around some one else.

Some cases happily in point are present to my own mind. I once knew of a parish in

which the truly devoted Vicar was, however, not popular; he had sadly felt the weight of depression and disappointment, and this had had a weakening reflex influence on his ministry. He was joined by a Curate, a man in the prime of youth and vigour, well qualified to attract confidence and affection, and particularly gifted as a preacher. Very soon many parishioners showed a preference for the young man's ministrations in public, and for his company in private; it was a golden opportunity for the almost spontaneous formation of a Curate's party. By the grace of God, the young Clergyman was enabled both to see the position at once and, by most decisive and manly speech and act, in the right quarters, to show, without a chance of mistake, that he considered his work as altogether identical with his Vicar's, never to be carried on for an hour outside a faithful subordination. Another instance may be given. Some years ago it was my duty to explain at a meeting the objects and work of the Divinity Hall with which I am connected. Quite incidentally, while describing our course of teaching, I mentioned my earnest desire

always to caution my student-friends against giving the slightest encouragement to the rise of Curates' parties. At the close of the occasion, a Clergyman rose at the back of the parish-room where we met, and said a few words, as gladdening as they were unexpected. He had come to the meeting-place with no knowledge of the meeting; merely to keep an appointment. But he happened to be the Vicar of a large town parish, and there to have had a friend of mine as his Curate; and he told us how this same Curate had come to him at a time when the parish, under circumstances inherited from past years, was ripe and ready for partizanship and division. Nothing would have been needed but the Curate's passive allowance of such tendencies to embarrass and spoil the difficult work of the Vicar. But my dear young friend was "found in Christ"; he knew his Lord's will in the matter, and he strove to do it. By active discouragement he precluded the mischief completely, and thus greatly strengthened his leader's hands for the work of God before him.

Surely few Christian men have wider and nobler opportunity than Curates have for the practice of "that lost grace, humility," in its
Tit. ii. 10. form of unselfish dutifulness, "good fidelity in all things." My Brethren know the sort of humility I mean; no artificial mannerism, nothing in the least degree unworthy of the "adult in Christ." What I do mean is that thing so scarce in our days, the noble opposite to that individualistic spirit than which nothing is more narrow, more low, more hostile to all true, genial development and greatness. I mean the generous modesty which delights to recognize the claims of an elder, of a leader; which loves the idea of trustworthy service, taking as its motto a more than princely *Ich Dien.* I mean the temper of mind which sees the happiness of siding against ourselves, of judging not others but ourselves; the spirit which is much more anxious to vindicate a superior's reputation than our own, more alert to ward criticism off from him than to shield our own head from its arrow. I mean the life which shows that so far from being ashamed of the idea of subjection, the man has learnt at

the feet of Jesus to think true service the truest freedom.

Another day, very probably, the Curate will find himself an Incumbent, and will have his own helping brother at his side. It will be a happy thing then for both parties if he has thoroughly learnt that great qualification for command, the experience of obedience; and has cultivated the exercise of sympathy with his subordinate by having first striven in honest loyalty to take his chief's part against himself.

Few, very few, are the cases where a man who has accepted a Curacy *with his eyes reasonably open* finds that such is the friction of the position that his first duty is to seek a release. There are such cases, I am afraid. But, I say it again, they are very few; and in every case which looks as if it were one of them, the Curate should *first* exercise the severest scrutiny upon himself, trying honestly to find, in some magnifying mirror, "the beam in his own eye." And even where such scrutiny still leaves it plain, after consultation not only with sensible friends (if

Matt. vii. 3.

necessary) but of course with the Lord Himself, that it is best to seek a change, let it be remembered that, up to the very last day of connexion, the Curate is still the Curate, bound to all possible loyalty and good faith.

It is with some misgivings of feeling that I have dwelt thus at length on difficulties and anxieties incident to the relationship of Curate and Incumbent. But I do not think after all that I shall be misunderstood. In the nature of the case, the bright sides of the matter have hardly needed comment. The Curate who finds himself the favoured and advantaged helper of some true-hearted leader needs little counsel from me, unless it be in face of the fact, on which we have touched, that the noblest leaders in the Lord in the whole English Church are not above parochial criticism, or even parochial slander. But I do know that there are Curates whose circumstances are less favourable; and I long to impress it upon them that few Christians have a larger and more fruitful field than they for the cultivation of some of the crowning graces of the Gospel.

It is for them to make no common proof of the power of the Indwelling Lord to subdue the iniquities of His people, to hallow their inmost spirits, to set before their lips the watch and ward of His blessed Presence, to drive utterly away from their pastoral souls the wretched spirit of sarcasm, to enable them for an unselfish faithfulness when no eye but the unseen Master's oversees.

It is no part of the system of the Church of England, as it is of that of the Church of Rome, to put a man (or a woman) under the "spiritual direction" of a fellow-sinner, who is to be, for the "directed," the organ and representative of the will of God. For such a method is no part of the apostolic Gospel, which never for a moment bids us surrender conscience into the keeping of another. "Who art thou that judgest *Another's* ser- Rom. xiv. 4. vant? To his *own Master* he standeth or falleth"; words which deeply and decisively contradict the root-ideas of spiritual despotism, for they teach us to think of our fellow-Christians, as if—for purposes of the conscience—He who is their Master and ours was, for them,

another Master than ours.[1] Yet the ideas of spiritual despotism are only the distortion or parody of ideas which are as true and sacred as the Gospel can make them; the ideas of self-abnegation for the good of others, and of resolute denial of the miserable spirit which prefers self to others and talks about rights when we should be intent on duties. The Christian man, and *à fortiori* the Minister of Christ, is called (as we have seen in earlier pages) to nothing less than a life in which, while conscience is inviolable, self is surrendered to Christ, in that practical sense of the words which means surrender, for His sake, *to others*, in all things which concern not right and wrong but our self-will.

"Likewise, ye younger, submit yourselves
1 Pet. v. 5. unto the elder." I never forget how the Apostle finishes the passage; "Yea, *all of you*, be subject one to another, and be clothed with humility," ἐγκομβώσασθε τὴν ταπεινοφροσύνην, "tie humility round you" as the servant ties on his apron. Most characteristic of the

[1] I owe this remark to my friend the Rev. H. E. Brooke.

Bible is the impartiality of the precept, so given; the Elders in the Church of God will not forget it on their side. But nevertheless the stress of the precept bears upon the younger man. He, in the Lord's order, is especially to recollect the sacred duty of a willing, loyal, and open-eyed humility.

All the instincts of our time are against this. But for the true disciple of Jesus Christ there is something stronger than any spirit of the age; it is the Spirit of God, dwelling in the inmost soul. By that wonderful power the Christian Curate, who walks with the Lord in secret, and finds in HIM his way of purity and consistency in the more general aspects of his "walk with others," will daily be enabled for a bright and glad consistency in the path of ministerial subordination. He will not cease to be a man, who must observe and think; nor will he necessarily hold it his duty never, in all loyalty and respect, to express to his Vicar a differing wish or opinion. But his bias will be against himself, and for his chief, if he indeed lets the Spirit of God lead him, and rule him, and fill him. For the Lord's sake, διὰ τὸν

Κύριον, and by the Lord's power, διὰ τοῦ Κυρίου, he will carry the principle of a watchful "submission" not only into greater things, but even into the smaller preferences of his elder and leader, if they in the least degree affect the duties of the parish and the church.

I close this chapter with a quotation. It is a letter written to the Editor of the *Record*, in the spring of 1885, after the perusal of a correspondence in that paper in which some "grievances of Evangelical Curates" had been set forth, and in which it had been implied that such grievances might give some sufferers occasion to transfer their sympathies to another "school."

"After reading the recent correspondence, I cannot forbear a few words expressive of the sad impression left upon my mind. Far be it from me to say that Incumbents have no lessons to learn from this correspondence. All Incumbents who have, by grace, 'the mind that was in Christ Jesus' will surely embrace every suggestion, however painful in form, which can stimulate them to larger manifestations of holy and self-forgetting sympathy, perfectly com-

patible with the firm attitude (which is also their duty) of responsible direction. But this thought leaves unaltered the mournful impression taken from the tone of the letters of my aggrieved Brethren. In one form or another one thought seemed to breathe in all;—the thought of *my* rights, *my* position, *my* gifts and opportunities, and what was due from others in regard of them; the complaint that others were not humble, when the Christian's first concern with humility is to derive it for himself from his Lord. Such a spirit is not easily compatible with a true secret hourly walk with God and abiding in Christ, the *sine quâ non* of fruit-bearing. And fruit-bearing is the supreme inner aim of the true pastoral life, fruit-bearing in the devoted doing of the Master's present will.

"In one letter I read with pain that 'it is no marvel' if men who cannot secure justice and happiness in one party should transfer their allegiance to another. Is it indeed 'no marvel'? Is it to be expected, then, in the holy Ministry, that convictions about divine truth should be modified by the personal claims and comfort of

the holder, if the word 'hold' may be used without severe irony in such a connexion? Can a saint and servant of God, young or old, Vicar or Curate, walk closely with Him all day, truly given to Him, wholly submissive to His word and will, and yet find it possible to deal with convictions so? What are personal rights and exterior happiness weighed against the claims of what we have really grasped as truth in the presence of the Lord? It is well for us that martyrs and confessors, and their worthy successors, our Evangelical ancestors of a century ago, knew how to answer that question.

"I aim to speak with all humility and sympathy. But I cannot but thus earnestly express the unalterable conviction that the only ministerial life which can be 'sanctified and meet for the Master's use' is the life in which conviction is sacred, in which Christ is all, and in which self is nowhere."

CHAPTER VII.

PASTOR IN PARISH (i.).

Master, to the flock I speed,
In Thy presence, in Thy name;
Show me how to guide, to feed,
How aright to cheer and blame;
With me knock at every door;
Enter with me, I implore.

CHAPTER VII

PASTOR IN PARISH (i.).

WE have talked together about the young Clergyman's secret life, and private life, and his life in (so to speak) non-clerical intercourse with others, and now lastly of his life as it stands related to his immediate leader in the Ministry. In this latter topic we have already touched the great matter which comes now at once before us, the man's work amongst his neighbours as he approaches them in his proper character, as a Pastor.

How shall I speak of "parish-work"? It would be a boundless subject if treated in detail and in the style of a directory of methods. But such a treatment is far from my purpose. To undertake it, I should not only need to be a widely experienced Pastor, which I cannot claim to be, for my life for

many years has been mainly devoted to academic teaching; I should need to be several widely experienced Pastors bound up into one living volume. So let no one expect to find here a prescription for the right plans and right practice of the many departments of the rural pastorate, or of the urban, or suburban; directions how to organize work, and how to develop it; how to deal with the Sunday School, or the Day School, or the Institute, or the Guild, or the Visitors' Meeting, or the Missionary Association. My hope is rather to get behind all these things to the pulse of the busy machinery; to offer a few hints to my younger Brethren "how to do it," from the point of view of their personal and inner preparedness for the multifold work, and to state some plain general principles which may run through all the doing.

I set before me then the Curate, and the Parish, with its demands for pastoral labour, and particularly for *Visitation.* Well do I know how immense the differences are between place and place in this same matter of visitation; how the parish of a few hundreds, or

even of two or three thousand, is one thing, and the parish of ten, or eighteen, or twenty thousand is another. I know that there are parishes, in London for example, where all the efforts of a staff of devoted Clergy seem to fail to do more than touch the edges of the work of domestic visitation. Yet surely even in such cases that work must not, and will not, be quite given up as hopeless. A little, where only a little is possible, is vastly better than none; even if it be only the visitation of the sick, and of those who immediately surround them, and with whom the sick-visit gives the Clergyman an opportunity. Such efforts, where nothing more of the kind is possible, if only done in an unmistakable spirit of love and self-sacrifice, must carry good to the people. And do not forget that they must, quite as necessarily, carry good to the Clergyman. For they are a means, for which nothing else can be quite the substitute, of bringing him into contact with the people's thoughts and lives in ways which will tell usefully (as we have seen in an earlier page) upon his whole ministry, particularly upon his work in

the pulpit, and at the mission-room desk, and in the open air.

But, to be as practical as possible, I will assume that the Curacy is of a more normal kind than that just supposed. The parish, whether in country or in town, is not so large as to make visitation from house to house impossible. And the Curate has had his work of this kind assigned him, and is setting out upon it. A good portion of every day (though I hope it is possible to give a part of one day each week to some sort of wisely managed holiday) is devoted to "the district"; now for a steady round of calls, door by door; now, in an irregularity not without method, for visits to special cases of sickness, or sorrow, or other need.

What shall be my first suggestion? It shall point to the Throne of Grace. Preface the pastoral round with special secret prayer. Sermons are usually (I wish it were always so now) prefaced with prayer in the pulpit that the heavenly blessing may rest upon the ordinance. Is it less fitting, less necessary, to prepare for the afternoon's or evening's

visitation with a secret petition in your own room that the apostolic ordinance of domestic visitation, to be administered now by you, may have the special grace of God in it? Pray for yourself, my younger Brother. Ask that you may go out well furnished with the peace, and patience, and wisdom laid up for you in your Lord; that you may have "by the Holy Spirit a right judgment in all things"; that you may have "the tongue of the taught,[1] to speak a word in season to them that are weary"; whatever sort of weariness it is. Pray for that secret skill of discernment which can see the difference of spiritual states, and

Acts xx. 20, 21.

[1] Isai. l. 4. Obviously the word "learned" in our Version is there used in its old English sense, "instructed, taught." No slight on "book-learning" is ever conveyed in the Scriptures. But the man in view here is not the highly-educated person, but the believer who has listened with *the ear* "of the taught" (see the end of the verse), as a disciple at the Master's feet; and so goes forth to speak with "*the tongue* of the taught," as a messenger who has learned sympathy, insight, holy tact and truthfulness, from the Master's heart. The whole passage is full of the blessed Messiah Himself, I know. But it has its reflected reference for all His true followers, and above all for all His true Ministers. May He give us, in His mercy, for every act of our messenger-work, both the ear and the tongue of His "taught" ones.

allot warning or comfort not at random but "in due season." Pray for that readiness for the unexpected which is best secured and best maintained in a close and conscious intimacy with your Saviour. The man "found in Him will be found ready *in spirit* (and that is after all the essential in spiritual work) for the sudden question, whether anxious or captious, for the sudden rudeness of ignorance or opposition, and again for the chronic and so to speak passive difficulty of indifference. "The tongue of the taught," while the "taught" man is found in Christ, will ever be sweet, wise, and truthful, as the owner of it goes his round. But Ezek. xxxvi. 37. we must seek for it; "He will be enquired of for this thing."

Then, as you pray for yourself, you will pray also for the people you are about to visit. Perhaps they are as yet strange to you, and you can ask for them only in general. But if you know anything at all about them it will be worth while to individualize your prayer, however briefly. Special, detailed prayer *is* a power with God. And it is a power with man too. To be dealing with one for whom you

know you have prayed is already to have a foothold there. Perhaps you may have an opportunity to *say*, quite naturally, that you have been praying for him; and this may very possibly be a direct vehicle of blessing.

You will go out then, as directly as possible, from the secret place of heavenly intercourse. That is a bracing atmosphere:

> "Fresh airs and heavenly odours breathe around
> The throne of grace;"

and those airs can quicken the young Pastor's spirit for the heaviest hours of a sultry afternoon or evening, till he comes back weary to his rooms, "tired in the Lord's work, but not tired of it," as dying Whitefield said.

So you go forth with real prayer. It is your wonderful privilege, thus going to carry nothing less than the blessed "Fulness of the Holy Ghost" for your inmost equipment. I say deliberately, nothing less than the heavenly Fulness—a far different thing from a mere stir and lift of the emotions. That most divine gift is a "calm excess" of tranquil power, received humbly by the prayer of faith. It

is not meant to be a rare luxury; it is a daily and hourly offer, a provided *viaticum* for every stage of walk and duty. Can we work aright for God while any corner of our being has no room for God, and is not possessed by Him?

Then, for true prayer and true practicality are the closest and most harmonious friends, you will of course aim with forethought and persistency at *method* in the pastoral work. The visits will be arranged as far as possible with economy of *space*; no difficult task in most town parishes, while in the country, of course, the matter is often much less easy. And you will study also economy of *time*. Your round is a work of sacred *business*. The minutes, the quarters of an hour, are never to run loose and unobserved. Who that has ever visited in a parish does not know the need of remembering that point, so easily forgotten? Here we visit a pleasant, welcoming neighbour, and it is all too easy to stay on, perhaps to little real purpose, with the secret satisfaction of knowing that the next and much less attractive call must be shortened in proportion. Here, less willingly, we are detained by one

of those ingenious tongues which make it so difficult to get in a word, or to stop the unprofitable continuity of topics. All these cases, and endless kindred ones, need a little foresight and firmness, and a little of the skill which is soon learnt by open heart and open eyes.

Obviously this line of caution is more needed by some men than by others. But it is needed by not a few; particularly in respect of the temptation to lengthen out unduly the visits that are pleasant to the visitor. One young Clergyman known to me, an indefatigable and devoted visitor, needed a strong reminder in this direction in the early days of his ministry. He would visit a sick person, who proved more or less responsive to his efforts, and would allow himself to *over*-visit, to an unwise extent, going often more than once a day, and long after the state of the invalid made such attentions urgent. And other work of course suffered in proportion. Wesley's precept to his workers needs our remembrance often; "Go not where you are wanted, but where you are wanted most."

But a risk on the other hand must be re-

membered. Economy of time must never mean hurry of manner, a thing which is nearly if not quite fatal to the usefulness of a visit. It is perfectly possible to combine promptitude with quiet; to come manifestly on business, and yet not in a bustle. We Clergymen may learn many valuable lessons in this, as in some other parts of our work, from our medical friends. Observe how a wise and kindly doctor visits *his* parishioners. He knows exactly why he comes; he knows that other patients are wanting him, in long succession; he knows that he must observe and advise as promptly and as much to the point as possible; and he knows that all must be done with a quiet, strong, untroubled manner, if it is to be done aright.

I spoke in a previous chapter about the sacred duty of watching and regulating manner. This is to be done at all times of intercourse, but above all in pastoral visits. To speak only of this point of hurry or calm of manner; it is most important. The right manner will make a visit of five minutes practically longer than a twenty minutes' visit which gives all

through it the impression that the Clergyman must be off. One of the most admirable Pastors I have ever known, the late Rev. Charles Clayton, of Cambridge,[1] did much of his work by five-minute visits. But they were always visits in which the whole thought was given to the case before him, and the word in season came from full knowledge of his flock and from an unmistakably pastoral heart.

A duty which you will carefully remember throughout your round is that of quiet Christian courtesy; impartially shown to rich, to middling, and to poor. I say impartially, with a view to *both* ends of the scale. Some men (perhaps not many, but some) seem to think that ministerial courage and fidelity in dealing with well-to-do parishioners demand a certain dropping of the courtesies of life; a very great mistake. Many more men are tempted to forget that their visits to the poorest should be, in the essence of the matter, as courteous as when they go to the portal which carries

[1] Afterwards Rector of Stanhope and Canon of Ripon.

a brass knocker. At the door of the dingiest cottage, or dingier lodging, never forget that you *ask* for entrance; it is your neighbour's castle-door; and you are not a sanitary inspector. If you happen to come in at the meal-time of the roughest and dirtiest, apologize as naturally and honestly as you would if you intruded on the wealthy churchwarden's well-set luncheon. Among the very lowest, do all you can to honour parents before their children (I know it is nearly impossible in some sad cases); and always honour old age.

Surely one good maxim on manner with our poorer neighbours is to aim to address them very much as we would address our neighbours of our own class. A patronizing manner is most certainly a very great pity, and almost sure to be resented. But so, too, is the ostentatious "hail-and-well-met" manner which is sometimes assumed; an over-drawn imitation, perhaps, of the workman's manner with his fellows. This is a mistake, because it is almost always unnatural. Few gentlemen get better at others by ceasing to act and speak as gentlemen. Let us talk quite quietly

and pleasantly, as just what we are, and as those who most unaffectedly "honour all men," and we shall not go far astray; always supposing that the matter of our talk is sensible, true, and to the purpose. 1 Pet. ii. 17.

To turn aside for a moment to the special and sacred work of Visitation of the Sick. It is not to be lightly done, as if it were an easy part of our duty, quite obvious in its aims and methods. The greatest judgment is often needed in the sick-room. We need quickness to perceive how much conversation the invalid can bear, if the case is one of great pain, or (what often makes undue length even more irksome) great weakness. We need an insight into the best side of approach to conscience, or to will. We need the skill which knows how to question enough, but not too much, not as the inquisitor but as the helper. Many another matter will call for sanctified common-sense in the sick-room; a restful *voice*, easy, quiet *movements*, and the like. And let me say that where you are visiting a chronic case, and need to call again and again, if a day and hour for the next

visit is mentioned it should be *kept to* with jealous punctuality. Nothing is more trying to the suffering and weary than uncertainty and suspense. I have known of much harm done to good men's influence by their neglect of punctuality with sick people.

Of punctuality generally I can (and surely need) speak only in passing. It is a primary duty of the busy but patient work of the pastorate. To be neglectful of it is to set up and keep up a needless and mischievous friction in our intercourse with others, and indefinitely to injure our influence in many ways. "No man ever waited five minutes for me in my life, unless for reasons quite beyond my power;" such was a remark of Charles Simeon's in his last days. *We* may be for ever unable to say this of our own past. But if so, shall it not be true for us also *from this day forward?*

Thus prepared by secret and special intercourse with God, and recollecting some simple maxims about practical points, you go out into the parish. But no; let me suggest one other preliminary, which, before most rounds of

pastoral visiting, cannot be out of place. You will take in your pocket *two books*, if not more; one, your visiting register and diary, the other —your Bible. Of the use to be made of the note-book I need not speak. About that to be made of the Book of God let me say a very few words.

I do not mean at all that you will make the reading of the Holy Scriptures a matter of form or routine; a thing which *must* be done, as an *opus operandum*, wherever there is a chance. But I do mean that you should have the Book always ready for use, and be prompt to sow the "incorruptible seed" from 1 Pet. i. 23. house to house as God gives opportunity. Remember, it is a Book sadly little known by the very large majority of your people; so that every natural and naturally-taken occasion to "let it speak," in private as well as in public, is a contribution to that urgent need of our modern world, Bible-knowledge. Remember again that, despite all the wretched unsettlements of belief amongst us, the Bible is still the Bible, for untold multitudes; it is owned by them, whether or no it is used, as the Oracle

of God. Let us let the Book speak at the open ear of such a conviction, however dimly the conviction is entertained. And then remember that the Bible, whatever be the state of current opinion about it, *is* as a fact the Oracle of God, and its immortal and life-conveying words have a mysterious fitness all their own to be the vehicle of the Spirit's voice to the human heart. Offer it, as often as you can, to be that vehicle.

Two simple expedients for effective use of the Scriptures in a parish round are presented to me by my own past experience, gathered from several years of regular parochial work. One is, the choice of some short pregnant passage which shall be, for that round, *the* passage to be read not once only but in house after house, unless, of course, there is special reason to the contrary. Such a reiteration, so I have often found, is a great help to the visitor, who probably feels on each new occasion that a new power and point appear in the passage, and that it seems each time easier to speak from it, however briefly, to the soul. The other expedient which my experience

recommends is to be prepared, whenever a hopeful opportunity occurs, to leave a Scripture message visibly behind you as you go. I used to carry with me a little sheaf of slips of paper, on each of which was printed the request, *Please read this passage, and think about it.* A short message from the heavenly Word would be written on the slip in pencil as I was about to go; and this visible and personal invitation to "read and think" proved often a real remembrance from the Lord.

But now you are actively engaged from door to door. If you are a new-comer, and particularly if it is also a district (in the great City perhaps) where visitation has been an unwonted thing, you must be prepared of course for very various sorts of reception. But assuredly in most districts by far, and at most doors, the man who exercises common tact and courtesy, and is plainly trying to do his duty in a loving and earnest spirit, and is known already, or now introduces himself, as the Clergyman, will be civilly and often gladly met. Let me pause for a moment to remind you of one great and valuable advantage which is ours as the

Ministers of the National Church and the servants of the parochial system. All honour to devoted servants of God in the Ministry of other denominations; in numberless instances they have done in the past, and are doing now, work which the National Church has either neglected, or has been unable to overtake; and the power of the Lord has been and is present with them to bless. But nevertheless I for one thank God for a National Church, and recognize in that Church's historical and practical position a unique opportunity and an immense advantage, so it be used faithfully and in loyalty to the Lord and His Word. And one feature of that position of opportunity is this, that it is the popularly (and rightly) recognized *duty* of the Church of England Clergyman to ask admission at every door, so far as he can go to every door, within his portion of the national vineyard. To a large degree this is understood to be our duty, our business, as it is not understood to be that of other Ministers of religion; and this is a fact which for the man who will use it with good sense and unobtrusive diligence is an invaluable introduction. A

"younger Brother" of my own, whose work began in a Liverpool Curacy, told me of his experience in this matter. His district contained a very miscellaneous population; almost all the great dissenting Churches were represented, and there were many Roman Catholics, and not a few Jews. But the Curate went to every door, as in duty bound; as a friend, a neighbour, a Christian, but distinctly as one of the Clergy of the parish. And with one solitary exception, an instance in which a Jew repulsed him, he was not only admitted but welcomed everywhere in his character as the Clergyman.

Of course there are, as I have said just above, streets and lanes where it is not quite so. Another friend of mine, labouring in East London, found that his black coat and white tie suggested to some of the people only the guess that he was—the undertaker; so strange to them was the presence of a Clergyman, or the idea of his duty. The same friend, by the way, found that there was one sure prescription for securing a welcome on a second visit—to make the people *laugh* before the first visit was over. He was no careless Pastor, who

forgot that he was in quest of souls, and that the message of the Lord is no jest. But his experience was that in that strange "lapsed" population the *rapport* between man and man set up by an honest laugh was important as the first step to something very different which was to follow.

In the ordinary pastoral round no such ingenious merriment will be necessary; though you will of course aim not only to be but to be seen to be *happy* in your work, and in your Master; *bright* with a light which is as natural in its influence as it is divine in its origin. In the ordinary round one great principle to be remembered, if I am right, is that you should *come to the point* as soon as possible. Some earnest men greatly shrink from this, and aim at the souls of their people by very circuitous routes. As a rule, I am sure, there is little need to do so; we are "expected" to be about our Master's business, and to deliver His messages without needless delay. I would not counsel the general verbal adoption of one good country Parson's salutation, who always opened the cottage door with, "*How are you?*

How is your soul?" But I have no doubt it was a good greeting for many a parishioner of his; and the *principle* of it is good for almost every pastoral visit. Yes, we shall do well to take people very much for granted, coming before them as we do (unless we quite forget our true character) as the Lord Jesus Christ's messengers and delegates, whatever else we are.

Most certainly and obviously the Pastor will often allude to common human interests, and should indeed know something and have something to say and do about temporal problems, things of body and estate. But then I do hold that he should "draw all things this" supremely important "way." All his pastoral intercourse should bear somehow upon the question of the state before God of the person or persons visited; upon conviction of sin, or comfort in grace, or Christian conduct; upon Christ and the soul, upon holiness and immortality, as the Gospel "brings them out into the light."

2 Tim. i. 10.

There are cases most certainly where this has to be done with peculiar tact and caution

unless quite obvious mischief is to be done instead of good. But let the man be always *lying in wait*, and he will very seldom do so quite in vain. An instance occurs to me, in the work of a most honoured veteran in the Ministry. He called on a new parishioner, a lady of his own class, and soon found out that she was politely but resolutely arranging to keep Jesus Christ out of the conversation; so cleverly that he fairly failed to break the fence. Just as he was leaving, for he could not go without one mention of his Master, he said, as the last word of his courteous farewell, "*The Lord bless you.*" That was all; but it was enough to carry in it the Spirit's message. The utterance stayed in the parishioner's soul, sounding solemnly on. It was impossible to be offended; it was impossible not to think. And the issue was, in God's time, a real and deep conversion.

But, I repeat it, such difficulties in "the daily round" need not be very frequent, if we do not create them for ourselves. How often the very persons to whom we think it wiser not to speak openly about the Lord Jesus Christ

(remember, it is about HIM, even more than about themselves, we are to speak) are longing to hear us do so! In the early days of my ordination I remember visiting an invalid gentleman, who had known me (for it was my Father's parish) all my life; and I was very cowardly in his case about coming to the point of Christ and the soul. Several visits, let me confess it with shame, were paid before I found myself able to propose that we should open the Bible together, and then pray. I was moved to the inmost heart by the actual tears of delight with which the proposal was welcomed.

And not seldom, if we do not come to the point, our people will bring us to it. A very dear friend of mine, a few years ago, was going his first circuits in a large London parish, and paid one among many first visits. He allowed it to be a mere visit of introductory civilities; but he need not have been so cautious. As he rose to go the good woman on whom he had called said to him, "You will have a word of prayer with me, will you not? The Vicar always does."

"Go, labour on, spend and be spent;
Thy joy to do the Father's will;
It is the way the Master went;
Should not the servant tread it still?

"Go, labour on while it is day,
The world's dark night is hastening on;
Speed, speed thy work, cast sloth away;
It is not thus that souls are won."

BONAR.

CHAPTER VIII.

PASTOR IN PARISH (ii.).

Work on in hope; the plough, the sickle wield;
Thy Master is the harvest's Master too;
He gives the golden seed, He owns the field,
And does Himself what His true servants do.

CHAPTER VIII.

PASTOR IN PARISH (ii.).

I TAKE up again the all-important subject of Pastoral Visitation, for the same sort of informal and fragmentary treatment as that attempted in the last chapter, and with the same feeling that the subject is practically inexhaustible.

One object which the visitor will do well to keep steadily before him is, to be a *teacher* as he goes. I have said something of this already, in recommending my Brethren to seize every good occasion for bringing in the Bible, and words about the Bible. But the whole work of instruction needs remembrance in our private intercourse with parishioners. Of course we shall avoid with watchful and willing care the magisterial manner, the too didactic tone. And only when obvious occasions present themselves

shall we even seem to *set ourselves* to teach; as when we are distinctly asked what is the meaning of this doctrine, or that passage of Scripture, or that phrase of the Prayer Book, or how to meet that difficulty of belief. Such moments do come; in some pastoral lives they come frequently; and whether the inquiry is made in a friendly spirit, with a real wish for information, or whether, as sometimes, it is the question of a critic or a caviller, it is an opportunity for which, in the Lord's grace, we should stand quite ready. To be sure we may have sometimes to remember that sensible precept of the Rabbis, "*Teach thy tongue to say, I do not know*"; the answer, often, of the truest and deepest-sighted wisdom. But even when answering so, instruction may be given, as we state the reasons for the answer. And we shall at least have the opportunity while so doing to bring in that other maxim, which we owe, I think, to the late Archbishop Whately, "*Never allow what you do know to be disturbed by what you do not know*"; a principle of very wide application.

But I am thinking now rather of the every-

day sort of pastoral call and conversation, in which perhaps the parishioner visited may be anything but a caviller, and anything but even a questioner; much too ready, perhaps, to take everything about Christian truths for granted, which, alas, means too often to take them as understood, to take them as believed, when there is little understanding of the matter, or even thought about it. Now it is a great thing when a pastoral visitor has the art (which needs to be considered, and to be acquired) of putting here and there into a quiet and friendly talk, best of all towards the close, some sentence which sets out a great truth clearly, strongly, and in a shape which may wake attention and help remembrance. That is the kind of didactic work which I earnestly recommend. If possible, let no visit close without some such utterance, if only one. It may be about the very foundations of all Christian truth; about the certainty of Christian facts, the Resurrection above all; about the Person of the Lord Jesus; about His finished work of Atonement; about faith, and our acceptance as believers in Him, and our

victory and deliverance in temptation by the power of the Holy Ghost through faith; about sin, its true nature, its guilt, its end. Or it may be about the holy practicalities of Christian conduct; about the Lord's call to us to break with everything that is against His will; about that deep, far-reaching truth of the Gospel that, while the sinner is saved by faith only, he is saved on purpose that he may serve, on purpose that he may 1 Thess. iv. 1. "walk and please God," and that he may do this above all in "the duty that lies near," in the plain things of the home, the business, the handicraft, the social circle. Or it may be about the mighty claims of the Missionary cause, about the strangely forgotten fact that the Christian Church exists mainly in order to evangelize the non-Christian world. Or it may be about the principles and duties of Church membership and Christian ordinances; the true nature of worship; the sacred duty of united worship; the call to hallow the Lord's Day; the precious benefits of the Sacraments of Christ, explained with the holy reverence and equally holy sim-

plicity and moderation of the Catechism and the Articles.

I need not fill my pages with numberless details. For my plea is that we should rather hold ourselves ready for the natural rise of such or such topics, and for a clear instructive word in season upon them, than that we should propose a theme and deliver a discourse. But I cannot too earnestly remind my Brethren how great *the need* of instruction is among many of our kindly neighbours, even among our neighbours who go regularly to Church and are constantly to be seen at the Table of the Lord.

Let me take one pre-eminent subject as my illustration: the foundation-truth of the Godhead of our Blessed Redeemer. Are you at all aware how widely spread is ignorance and error on that subject, far beyond the limits of the "Unitarian"[1] community? I remember a pastoral visit long ago to a slowly dying

[1] A term which I use under protest. If a Unitarian means a believer in the Unity of the Godhead, every orthodox Christian is a true Unitarian. Only, he is a Trinitarian also, from another side. I may venture to refer on this subject to a small book of my own, *Outlines of Christian Doctrine*, p. 20.

parishioner, a labouring man somewhat stricken in years, who had been a church-goer, though not a communicant. I soon fell into a conversation with my friend which took a sort of catechetical shape; my aim was to see where the soul's hopes for eternity really rested. Who and What was JESUS, whose name I know he humbly reverenced? Was He a good Man? Yes. But anything more? There was a long hesitation, and then the dear man expressed a faltering persuasion that the Lord could not be less than "a blessed angel." That case, I am well convinced, is very much more representative than some of us may think. At a recent Church Congress I heard some remarks in just this direction from Bishop Walsham How, who speaks from a large pastoral experience; his anxiety about the immense extent of popular ignorance or misbelief about the Saviour's Person was at least as great as mine.

And so too is ignorance and misbelief about the work of His Cross, and of His Holy Spirit. "I hope I shall have all my sufferment here," said one poor invalid to me in old days, speak-

ing indeed from a very comfortless bed, in the slow pains of a dire disease. She had been long within sound of clear, bright Christian teaching. But deep in the soul, unmoved and ah, so difficult to dislodge, lay that notion of an atoning value in our own pains which is a radical contradiction to the glorious paradox of the perfect and unique work of Calvary :—

"Thy pains, not mine, O Christ,
Upon the shameful tree
Have paid the law's full price,
And purchased peace for me.

"Thy Cross, not mine, O Christ,
Has borne the awful load
Of sins that none in heaven
Or earth could bear but God." [1]

As regards the Person and the Work of the blessed Spirit, great and general is the oblivion, and manifold are the mistakes. I fear that even in the best instructed congregations, under the clearest public teaching, there are all too many who, practically, "have not so much as heard whether there be any Holy Ghost." The belief in His glorious Personality

Acts xix. 2.

[1] Bonar, *Hymns of Faith and Hope* (First Series).

is faint and vague. The confusion of His Presence and Power with our "better feelings" is very, very common. The solemn questions which the Scripture bids us put to ourselves, Rom. viii. 9. whether *or not* we "have the Spirit of Christ"—not merely "a Christian spirit" in the sense of tone and temper, but the Holy Ghost, proceeding from the Son, and uniting the true believer to Him—are little understood, and rarely used upon the man by himself. And the very thought of such a presence and such a power of the Lord the Life-Giver as Eph. v. 18. shall "*fill us with* the Spirit" is not yet existent, I fear, in the minds of many even earnest Christians

Here are fields, large and fruitful, for the teaching visitor's cultivation. And so are the other possible subjects indicated above; such as the claims of the Lord upon our personal consistency in little things; His solemn call to all His people to be, directly or indirectly, the evangelists of the world; and the nature of His blessed sacramental Institutions.

On that last subject it is not my intention to enter at any length. But a few words I may

take this occasion to say, and I will assume that I am speaking to a younger Brother who in the main agrees with me in what are commonly called Evangelical Church principles. Let me first then counsel you to take care that no one shall be able, lawfully, to charge you with making light of the Sacraments,[1] or with leaving uncertain your belief as to their divine purpose and function. A ministry which is silent about them, and indistinct in its teaching on them, cannot in this respect be fully true to either the Prayer Book or the Bible. Let your instructions on this great subject, in public and in private, be definite, reverent, and full of thankfulness and praise for those great gifts of God. Then on the other hand, do not, if I may speak freely, while with all respect, think to honour the Sacraments by exaggeration, by speaking more of them than of that far greater thing, the blessed Grace of God in Christ, of which they are the "sure *witnesses* and effectual

[1] I mean of course Baptism and the Supper of the Lord, which *alone* the Church of England recognizes as Christian Sacraments, *Sacramenta Evangelica*, "Sacraments of the Gospel" (see Art. xxv., par. 2).

signs."[1] If I do not mistake, one of the most prevalent tendencies of current thought in the Church now is the tendency to invert, in a certain way, the relations between Sacrament and Grace; to develop a doctrine of the Sacrament such that the doctrine of Grace can be seen only, as it were, through it. And the result is, very often, so at least it seems to me to be, a very poor and attenuated presentation of the glorious things said in Scripture about "the grace
Tit. ii. 11. of God which bringeth salvation," and about the work of pure and simple, but mysteriously mighty, faith in our appropriation of Christ's merits and our reception of Christ's living power by the Holy Ghost. Let no such inversion mark your teaching. And if I may give one further suggestion, I would say, remind yourself frequently of the very words of the Prayer Book (including the Catechism) and the

[1] *Certa testimonia, efficacia signa* (Art. xxv.). It is worth the while to point out that a "*sign*" is "*effectual*" when it *effectually does the work of a sign*, not some quite different work. A seal is an effectual seal, not because, conceivably, its matter could be used as a powerful medicine, but because, *attached to its document*, it effectually seals the document's validity. A seal is in this respect a special sort of "effectual sign." And so are the Sacraments.

Articles on these great subjects. And inform yourself to some extent, at first hand, of the views of the men who cast our Services and our Articles into their practically present shape; the views of Cranmer, of Ridley, of Jewell, and, just after them, of Hooker; not forgetting one great foreign theologian, Henry Bullinger, who exercised a special influence on the English divines of Edward and Elizabeth's time in the matter of sacramental doctrine.[1] You will find in him a full measure of holy reverence, and at the same time a luminous clearness and definiteness of exposition. The central idea of his teaching is the idea of the Covenant Seal, the "instrument" of solemn, valid, legal "conveyance."

While on the subject of Church Doctrine, I may go a little further, and remind you how very likely you are to discover in your rounds many mistakes about both the doctrine and the government of the Church of England. I have had considerable experience of such questions in the way of private pastoral ministry; I have

[1] See the Parker Society's collection of authors for Bullinger's *Decades*, or Doctrinal Sermons; officially recognized as a body of divinity by the Church of England in Elizabeth's reign.

found pious dissenters, or church-people whom they had influenced, fully persuaded that the Church of England teaches unconditional regeneration in the hour of Baptism, that she teaches at least a near approach to Transubstantiation, that she entrusts to her priests the power of conferring or withholding the divine forgiveness, and that, officially and in set terms, she "unchurches" all communities not episcopally organized.[1] It is well to be quite sure that these beliefs about the Church are mistakes, provably such, in the light of the Prayer Book and Articles, and of history. It has been my happiness to bring some such questioners as I have described to "sincere and conscientious communion with" the Church of England, in a loyalty which leaves ample room for loving sympathy with all true Christians. And the chief means has been the production of proof that the Church herself, as distinguished from particular teachers and leaders in the Church, does not teach the tenets alleged.

[1] As regards the Scottish and Continental Protestant Churches it is not too much to say that, with the very rarest exceptions, English Church writers *of all schools* regarded them as "Sister Churches of the Reformation"—*till about* 1830.

But to come back to matters more primary than even these; I must remind my younger Brother that there is, all around him, in the average circles of even church-going people, a sorrowfully faint insight into the sinfulness of SIN; into the terrible realities of its *guilt* before God (a point too often absent from even earnest modern teaching), and of its *power*; yes, and into its true *nature*, as it comes out, not in outbursts of word or deed, or in practices which public opinion condemns, but in imagination, in desire, in tone. It may surprise us (when we think how very elementary are the spiritual principles involved), but I fear it is a fact, that sin is regarded by vast numbers of church-people (I am not thinking at all of "the lapsed masses" now) as a matter of little importance if it does not come out in some very positive form. Multitudes among us are quite insensible to the spiritual penetration of the law of God, and have never given a thought to the question of a heart-surrender to His will in everything, and the sin of merely withholding that surrender.

Then, to take another primary subject of a

different class; there is a wide and general ignorance of the great lines of Christian Evidence, and a large open door accordingly for the active attacks of shallow, or subtle, unbelief. Few have ever been taught in any definite way the supreme significance in this respect of the fact of the Lord's Resurrection, and its mighty walls of proof; and the reasons for our belief that the Bible is indeed not of man but of God; the witness of history to prophecy; and so on.

I owe an almost apology for this long talk about subjects of doctrine, and practice, and evidence. But I have kept all along the purpose of this chapter in view. I wish to remind my Brethren how very much they may do, in the course of visitation, to *drop seeds* of fact, of truth, of principle, in careful, thoughtful words, the product of private reading and reflection, called out by some natural occasion. Undoubtedly, the subjects I have outlined are themes for the pulpit, and for the Bible class, as well as for the visit. But my feeling is that the visit gives opportunities quite of its own for didactic work. We ought to be "natural"

everywhere; but we are sometimes suspected, or imagined, to be less so in public than in private; and besides, in private we give and take; we are open to question and answer; and this may give quite special advantage to the word spoken, quietly and pleasantly, but pointedly, in the pastoral interview.

"The priest's lips should keep knowledge." The Clergyman should be ready everywhere to be the teacher on the great subjects which he is supposed to make his own. He will never intrude instruction, or parade it; but he will everywhere be on the watch for the occasion for it, ἐξαγοραζόμενος τὸν καιρόν, "purchasing the opportunity," at the cost of care. Mal. ii. 7. Eph. v. 16.

And here I may come again to that important branch of visitation, the visitation of the sick. The Church, as we well know, provides a Form of Visitation; most helpful and suggestive in its principles and outline for all. But it is, as you are aware, *imposed* by the Canon (lxvii.) only on such Clergymen (very scarce personages) as have no licence to preach. As a fact, we Presbyters are left to our own discre-

tion in this sacred part of our work; and that discretion we should seek prayerfully to cultivate. How different are the circumstances in each one of an average series of sick-visits! As I write the words, such a series from my own past days rises up before me; and I transcribe a few recollections from the book of memory.

W. S. is a retired tradesman, a thoughtful and rather reticent man; brought up a Socinian, and professedly such still. I am trying to lay siege to him, not without merciful tokens of hope from the Lord. And the simple plan is, not to open the controversy between Socinus and Scripture, but to arrange that each visit shall have its short Scripture reading, its friendly talk, and its prayer, all bearing mainly on the deadliness of sin and the wonder and glory of salvation. I happen to know that the married daughter of W. S., a very intelligent woman, was brought from heresy to a divine Saviour's feet by means of a sermon, not on Christ's Godhead, but on the sinfulness of sin.

T. H. is a sturdy old blacksmith, old enough to have been bred in the infidel school of Carlile (quite another person than Carlyle), and

steeped in old-fashioned Chartism. He always has the newspaper on his now helpless knees, never the Bible; but he almost always has some Bible difficulty ready for me. It is pleasant to be able this afternoon to show him, holding the page up before his eyes, that his last stumbling-block is one of his own (or his friends') bold invention. He meets civility always civilly, and never resents a natural transition from the last bit of politics to the Gospel. But it is a hard, sad case. The Lord only knows how the apparently motionless conscience fares.

T. G. is a fine, manly artizan, a coach-painter, scarcely yet in middle life; lately the somewhat bitter and very self-satisfied critic of his good and devoted wife's simple faith. I have had rather discouraging talks with T. G. before to-day; but now he is very ill, and a few Sunday afternoons ago he sent across the road for the Curate, who to his own solemn joy found him broken down in unmistakable conviction of sin, asking what he must do to be saved. It is a blessed thing to visit him now, for already the rays of the eternal sun are

shining between the clouds of a deeply genuine repentance; and the visitor's task is plain,—

"To teach him all the mercy, while he shows him all the sin."

Soon it will be my happiness, I hope, to administer to him, as a penitent believer, with his now happy wife and a faithful friend, the precious Communion; and I look forward to see him depart in due time in the peace of God, to be with Christ, for whom already he has learnt to testify.

Then comes another visit, to one of our "bettermost" neighbours; this door bears, or ought to bear, the proverbial brass knocker. But be the door what it may be, there is great need and great mercy inside it. The dear man, W. T., lately in active professional life in the home civil-service, is sinking under the most agonizing of human maladies, and it is very near the close; this is the second visit to-day, in his urgent need. But, blessed be God, grace, once absent, has found its way through the terrible obstacle of pain, and his scarcely articulate utterance—intelligible to his visitor only be-

cause now so familiar—speaks of the joy and rest of the Lord Jesus Christ, and of the sufferer's longing for the salvation of another soul, a soul very dear to him.[1]

Such visits tell upon the heart, and upon the head, and perhaps the round among the suffering has been long enough to-day. To-morrow we will try to get a quiet half-hour with W. R., a shopkeeper, sinking in consumption; a man of no common natural refinement and thoughtfulness, but long troubled with that sort of scepticism which is generated (who knows in how many cases?) by the mysteries, not of God's revelation, but of His providence. For him, too, the visitor's business is to lay a gentle siege, "here a little, and there a little," trying never to lose patience with objections and difficulties, but rather to sympathize with them *as to their pains*, and then to suggest the answer in Jesus Christ. And oh joy, the Lord is finding the way in, through His Word, and the clouds are passing away from the

[1] Wonderful to say (it is to me very wonderful), I have known more than one bright conversion take place amidst the untold pangs of such an illness.

man's mind, and soul, and forehead, as he is getting to "know WHOM he believes."[1]

Then we can walk round the corner—how the beloved streets and lanes rise up in memory before me as I write!—to see J. F., a young printer, dying in the brightest joy and peace, won from carelessness to a solid faith by the work and witness of earnest dissenting Christians, but glad and thankful to receive the Communion of the Lord from his dear Vicar, or his Vicar's son. And then five minutes' walk takes us to a tiny alley in the denser part of the widespread parish, where a poor life-long cripple, W. G., lies day and year upon his *little* bed—little, because though the head is full-sized, and the brain within it is an adult brain, the body has never grown since childhood. Here is a case for steady sympathy, and also for gentle and steady aiming at instruction as well as comfort. And then, not far off, we will take the privilege of a quiet visit to an aged Christian woman, J. N. In long past years

[1] I possess a beautiful little Bible given me by dear W. R., who has now been many years with Christ. Such a gift is a very sacred treasure to a Pastor.

loving saints found her pining in extreme poverty, and sunk in a dull, despairing indifference. Now it is a great spiritual help to sit in her little attic beside her, and draw her on to speak (she is no loquacious person by nature, and needs drawing on) about the needs of the soul, and the glorious fulness of the Son of God. She is no common Christian; not only in life but in thought this appears. At the time of her conversion, she could not read a letter. Since then, she has repeatedly read with great spiritual insight and enjoyment Archbishop Leighton's Commentary on St Peter. Here is a room in which the visitor learns quite as much as he teaches. And so he does in a still smaller and much darker room, three minutes' distant from J. N.'s. There lies blind R. W., in his strong days the head-servant of an old farmer of our village, and to all appearance as little capable of spiritual interests as the animals he fed. But on his sick-bed, the comfortless couch of many declining years, a loving visitor, a devoted lady-worker, has found him out, and the Lord has found him out through her. He never

knew A from B in his life, and never will. But do you want proof of the power of grace to quicken mind, as well as to convert soul? Come with me up the stairs into dear old R. W.'s darksome room, and in the course of our talk you shall hear his quavering voice saying things, quite humbly and naturally, about the glory of his Saviour, and the way of salvation, and the joy and peace of his heart in God, which are not only loving ascriptions but clear and sound divinity. It is good to be with him.

I have spoken mainly, though not only, of cases of warm interest and encouragement. Of course there are sorrowful and heart-trying visits to the sick. One such, to poor old T. H., I have described. And we might see the much older A. C., a woman of near ninety years, who seems impenetrable to the true light, though grateful and kindly towards the visitor; and B. F., older still, ninety-six, so vain of her age that it is difficult to get her off the beloved theme; and J. G., a steady, self-righteous man; and C. W., clever, and disposed to scoff; and T. B., known to be leading a very evil life, civil, but immovable.

The work is very various, very interesting, and full of the call for "long patience," while full, too, of blessed encouragements and surprises. But "the time would fail me." Ah, let me not close without saying to my younger Brother how deeply humbling to me are the memories of those pastoral days, and humbling above all as I look back and wish now, in vain for ever, that I had *visited more*, among both the sick and the whole. "Enter not into judgment with Thy servant, O Lord"; "To Thee only it appertaineth to forgive sins."

My dear younger Brother, resolve that by the grace of God you will be a visitor, whatever else you are, or are not. And be a visitor who respects his neighbours, who feels with them, whose heart lives with them, and who on the other hand watches over his call to instruct them, to clear up and deepen their thoughts of self, and God, and life, and death, and salvation, and duty, and eternity.

"Go, labour on; spend and be spent." There is a sure reward, seen or not seen as yet; and often the most unlikely quarter shall prove the quarter of blessing, and the last shall

be first. One recollection, drawn out of my earliest childhood, shall close this wandering talk. It is of dear old Mrs E., then aged quite eighty-six. She must have been born under the rule of King George the Second. A farmer's widow, she had been absolutely and perfectly respectable all her life, and was entirely satisfied with her state and her prospects for the next world. My dear Father, and his devoted Curate of those days, the Rev. W. D., not seldom saw her, but without leaving any apparent impression on her conscience. At last that conscience woke. The Curate read a chapter, in her hearing, to her pious invalid daughter, who had sought her mother's conversion for years in prayer, and had *lived* true Christianity all the while in her mother's home. And on a sudden, something in that chapter (it was the third of Romans) said to the old lady, "You have lived eighty years in the world, and never done a single thing for the love of God." The conviction was tremendous in its depth and quality, and it lasted long. But a very bright light followed, and shone with holy fulness through what proved to be

several remaining years of beautiful old age. She rejoiced in her adorable Saviour with joy unspeakable, a joy meanwhile perfectly sober and full of the good fruits of loving righteousness. She died at last, singing, or rather musically murmuring, *Rock of Ages*.[1] And my recollection, across seven-and-forty years, is of that dear old lady of the past, sitting upright in her parlour, as my Mother led me in to see her, and wearing a look upon her face which I can only now describe as a remembered ray of light.

[1] My dear Father, many years ago, published a full narrative of Mrs E.'s last days, in a little volume of pastoral recollections, *Pardon and Peace.*

"I love, I love my Master;
I will not go out free;
For He is my Redeemer,
He paid the price for me.

"I would not leave His service,
It is so sweet and blest,
And in the weariest moments
He gives the truest rest."

MISS F. R. HAVERGAL.

CHAPTER IX.

THE CLERGYMAN AND THE PRAYER BOOK.

Dear pages of ancestral prayer,
Illumined all with Scripture gold,
In you we seem the faith to share
Of saints and seers of old.

Whene'er in worship's blissful hour
The Pastor lends your heart a voice,
Let his own spirit feel your power,
And answer, and rejoice.

CHAPTER IX.

THE CLERGYMAN AND THE PRAYER BOOK.

IN the present chapter I deal a little with the spirit and work of the Clergyman in his ministration of the ordered Services of the Church, reserving the work of the Pulpit for later treatment.

Let me begin by a brief reminder of the greatness of the spiritual treasure which we possess in the Book by which we minister. How shall I speak of it as I would? "The Prayer Book isn't inspired, I know," said an old coast-guardsman some years ago to a friend of mine, "but, sure and certain, *'tis as bad as inspired!*" "I find the Liturgy," said another veteran, Charles Simeon, "as superior to all modern compositions as the work of a philosopher on any deep subject is to that of a schoolboy who understands scarcely anything

about it." "All that the Church of England needs to make her the glory of all Churches," said Simeon's friend, the late Rev. William Marsh, "is the spirit of her own services."

I am not so blind as to maintain that our Book is ideally perfect, and that its every sentence is infallible. It is not quite literally "as bad as inspired." After using it in ministration for nearly five-and-twenty years I own to the wish that here and there the wording, or the arrangement, or the rubrical direction, had been otherwise in some detail, perhaps in some important detail. I do certainly wish very earnestly indeed that the Revisers of 1661-2 had expressed themselves more happily in that Rubric about "Ornaments" which within recent years has proved—little as they expected it, or intended it, to do so—such a fertile field of discord. But for all this, my five-and-twenty years' ministerial use of the Prayer Book has only deepened my sense of its inestimable general value and greatness.

If a temperate and equitable revision were possible at the present time I should welcome the prospect on most accounts. But it seems

to me plain that it is *not* at present possible. And meanwhile I thank God from my inmost heart for the actual Prayer Book as a whole.

Let me point out a very few of the claims of the Book on our love and gratitude; and now specially in view of what we may sometimes hear said about it by Christians not of our own Church.

i. Observe its profound and searching *spirituality*. It is quite true that in a certain sense the Book takes all who use it for granted; it assumes them to be worshippers in spirit and in truth; it does not pray for them, or lead them in public worship to pray for themselves, as for those who do not know and love God, who have not come to Christ. But then what form of public, common prayer can well do this? And meantime the Book does, especially in the service of the Communion, and particularly in that too often omitted part of it, the "longer Exhortation," beginning *Dearly beloved in the Lord*, throw the worshipper back upon himself for self-examination. This is just the method of St Paul in his addresses to the Christian community. He

writes to all as "saints," "faithful," elect," "sanctified." What does he mean? Does he mean that those glorious terms are satisfied by the fact that all have been baptized, or even that all are communicants at the sacred Table? Not at all. He takes all for granted as being what they profess to be, when he greets the community. But he says also, "If any man have not the Spirit of Christ he is none of His"; "If any man love not the Lord Jesus Christ, let him be anathema"; "Examine yourselves, whether ye be in the faith; prove your own selves. Know ye not that Jesus Christ is in you—except ye be *ἀδόκιμοι*, counterfeits?" "In Jesus Christ neither circumcision availeth anything, nor uncircumcision, but faith which worketh by love." Such sentences throw a flood of holy and searching light on the sense in which St Paul "took them all for granted." And the Prayer Book is in true harmony with both parts of the Apostle's method.

Rom. viii. 9; 1 Cor. xvi. 22; 2 Cor. xiii. 5; Gal. v. 6.

And then, think what the Book *does* thus searchingly and helpfully "take for granted." It assumes a deep sense of sin, such a sense

as is indeed "grievous unto us." It takes for granted our deep desire both for pardon and for spiritual victory. It assumes our desire to be "kept this day without sin"; to "follow the only God with pure hearts and minds"; to "be continually given to all good works"; to "be enabled by the Lord to live according to His will"; to have "all our doings ordered by His governance"; to have "such love to Him poured into our hearts that we may love Him above all things." It assumes our desire to "read, mark, learn, and inwardly digest all the Holy Scriptures." It assumes our readiness to "suffer on earth for the testimony of the truth, looking up steadfastly to heaven, and by faith beholding the glory that shall be revealed." It assumes our adoring devotion to our Lord Jesus Christ, and that we present "ourselves, our souls and bodies, a reasonable, holy, and living sacrifice," to our God.

I heard a few years ago of a remarkable case of secession from the Church of England. A thoughtful and conscientious man left us because, as he said, he could no longer seem to concur in such words of intense spiritual reality

and surrender *while he did not fully mean them.* On his principles, I fear there ought to be a large exodus from our Church. But that is not the fault of the Church, or of the Church's Book. It is the fault of the worshippers, and it is a solemn call to us not so much to criticize the Liturgy as to "examine *ourselves.*"

In this connexion I am reminded of a characteristic saying of an honoured friend of mine, now at rest with the Lord after a long and faithful ministry. He was one of those men who instinctively speak strongly, perhaps sometimes roughly; but such roughness is often useful. "The Prayer Book," said he, "is always handy to throw at people's heads"; figuratively, of course, not literally. He slung it out in vigorous quotations from his pulpit, point blank at the unreality, and formalism, and pharisaism, and love of this present evil world, which too often underlies the most precise "churchmanship" and the most punctual church-going.

My old friend's strong word may carry a suggestion to some of my younger Brethren; though I would advise their deferring a *projectile*

use of the Book till they are seniors in the Church. But the youngest Minister of Christ, in all loving modesty, may reach many a conscience (beginning with his own) by well-timed words from the Prayer Book, showing what the Book takes for granted in the worshipper.

ii. Next I point to the abundant and loyal *Scripturality* of the Prayer Book. I venture to say that no Service Book in the world is quite like ours in this. This characteristic lies on the surface; in the wealth of Scripture poured out in every service before the people; Psalms, Lessons, Canticles, Epistle, Gospel, Introductory Sentences, Decalogue, Comfortable Words. At the Font, in the Marriage Ordinance, at the Grave, it is still the same; Scripture, in our mother tongue, full and free, runs everywhere. And below the surface it is the same. Take almost any set of responses, or any single prayer, and see the strong warp of the Bible in it all. And then go for a moment from the Services to the Preface of the Book, and see what the Fathers of our English Liturgy thought and intended about the place of the Holy Scriptures in worship.

I hope my Brethren have all read that "Preface" with care; I mean, of course, the whole length of introductory matter which precedes the Tables of Lessons; nothing of it later than 1662, most of it (indeed all but the first section, written by Sanderson) dating in substance from 1549.[1] I hope it has all been read by you; but I am not quite certain of it, so little attention is at present called to those important and authoritative statements of principle. But however well you may already know them, they will repay another reading; and so you will be reminded again that the really first thought in the minds of the men who gave us our Prayer
2 Thess. iii. 1. Book in English was to let "*the Word of God* have free course and be glorified" in all the worship of the people. Those men were learned in the past, and they reverenced history and continuity. But they reverenced still more the heavenly Word, and where they found the ample reading and hearing of it impeded by even immemorial usage, the usage had to give way, without reserve, to the Bible.

[1] I do not forget that some modifications in detail, as to the Lectionary, are quite recent.

Yes, the Prayer Book is, whatever else it is, searchingly, overflowingly Scriptural; full of the Bible, full of Christ. Let us drink its principles and its manner in, that they may come out in our life and our preaching.

And now for a few simple practical suggestions on our ministerial use of the Book.

i. First, I would entreat my younger Brother to resolve in the Lord's name that his own use of the Prayer Book in his ministration be to him a thing of sacred importance and personal reality. We *need* to form such a resolve deliberately, and to watch and pray over it. Do we not know what strong temptations lie in the other direction? We have to use these forms over and over again; before many years are over perhaps we could "take" a whole service, except the appointed Scriptures, without looking at the book: is it not too easy under such conditions to read as those who read not, and to pray as those who pray not? And all too often the Clergyman, younger or older, allows himself almost consciously, almost on principle, to form an inadequate estimate of his Prayer-Book work. Perhaps he regards the prayers

as in such a sense "the voice of the Church" that he is willing to be little more than a machine through which the Church offers them. Or perhaps on the other hand he lets himself forget their immense importance, under a strong, and just, sense of the sacred importance of the Sermon. He is alive and awake in the pulpit, and seeks his Lord's presence there, and realizes it as sought; but in the desk—he goes by himself, and much of his precious time there is spent in thought which wanders to the ends of the earth while his voice does its decent but somnambulatory part alone. I can only appeal with all my heart to my younger Brother not to let it be thus with him. And the only effective recipe against the trouble is faith, exercised in prayer and watching, with a full recollection of the urgent importance of the matter. For indeed it *is* all-important that the servant of God should be "given wholly to" his work, at the reading desk, at the lectern, at the Table, at the Font.

It is easy to say, as it is often said, that we "must not preach the prayers," must not obtrude our personality in leading the devo-

tions of the congregation; that our part is to be regular and audible, and otherwise to "efface ourselves." Most certainly we ought not to *preach* the prayers, in public any more than in private. But then, we ought to *pray* them. Most certainly we ought not to obtrude our personality upon the thought of the worshippers. But then, we ought to serve them with our personality, and we can best do this, surely, by a spirit and a manner which is unmistakably that of the fellow-worshipper, who feels *himself* to be in the presence of the King, and knows that the petitions and the promises are for him at least a holy reality. I am perfectly well aware that it is not *easy* to steer between a more or less mechanical manner and a demonstrative one, and that perhaps of two evils the former is the less. But I am sure it is *possible* to steer the right line, by using sanctified common-sense, and asking for a little candid counsel from those who hear us, and above all by being what we seek to seem—true worshippers, spiritually awake and humbly reverent.

As long as man is man, so long will the law

of sympathy hold good. And by that law it is certain that the way to promote, so far as we can, a spirit and tone of true worship in our people is to possess—and to show—that spirit ourselves, as we lead, and also join, their worship. Never declaim the prayers, but always pray them, from the soul and with the voice.

ii. I spoke just now of what we should do at the lectern. Let me earnestly press upon my Brethren the great duty of rightly reading the Lessons. Do you want to carry out the will and purpose of the Church of England? As we have seen, that purpose is above everything to glorify the Word of God. See then that the Lesson, as read by you, is as audible, as intelligible, as impressive as you can make it. Take care beforehand that you understand its points, its arguments, its emphasis. Take counsel with yourself, and perhaps with others, about ways and means for bringing these things out in your public reading. Remember that for very many of your people (I fear I am right in saying so) the Church Lessons are the most solid pieces of Scripture they ever hear,

or ever read. Many years ago it was not uncommonly said that in "these days of universal reading" we might perhaps abbreviate our Church Lessons. But since that time it has been more fully and sadly realized, by very many of us at least, that universal reading does not mean universal Bible reading by any means, but much rather universal newspaper and novel reading. The heavenly Book is *terribly unfamiliar* to multitudes of churchgoers, as you will find, if you ask, when you go about your parish; of this we have already thought. Therefore, make all you can of the reading of the Lessons in public worship. Προσεχε τῇ ἀναγνώσει, says the Apostle to Timothy, "Give attention to the reading"; does he not mean, be diligent in reading the Scripture to the people? The precept is as much as ever in point in our day. 1 Tim. iv. 13.

iii. As regards the occasional services, Public and Private Baptism, Marriage, Burial, I would earnestly counsel my Brother to put personality into his reading in them all, in the moderate sense indicated above. The fact that such

occasions are necessarily more or less *special* in their interest for some at least of those present should never be forgotten; bring the power of a sympathetic interest and earnestness to bear upon it. In administering Public Baptism I have often realized this to a very peculiar degree. Who can feel the least fondness for little children, and have the slightest insight into a parent's heart, and not do so? Our service is undoubtedly long; very long indeed when accompanied by a chorus of perhaps several little crying voices. But let the servant of God "be in it," and he will find himself much more touched than troubled by the babies' lamentations as he speaks to the sponsors about the young helpless souls, and turns to the Lord of all grace to dedicate them to Him and to invoke His blessing on them for time and eternity, and then applies the watery Seal of all the promises to their small foreheads. I have always found it very hard to get through that service with a perfectly steady voice; and after all, why should we be so careful to do so?

Private Baptism is indeed a special occasion.

There are reasons, no doubt, why it must not be too readily administered; in some parishes parents, for one reason or another, too often try to secure "a christening" in private, on insufficient grounds, with no intention of a public dedication afterwards. But when the case is clear, and you are at the little suffering one's side, perhaps with a distressed mother close beside it and you, see to it that you so minister the rite, so read the few precious words, as both to sympathize and to teach. Let me add that Private Baptism often brings the Clergyman into a house where religion is utterly neglected; and the opportunity may be a priceless one, if the power of love and spiritual reality is with you in the work.

And when you officiate at a Wedding, different as the conditions are from those just remembered, still do not forget that for at least some there present the hour is a deeply moving one. And is not the Marriage Service a noble one to read, to interpret, with its peculiar mingling of immemorial and archaic simplicity with a searching depth of scriptural exhortation, and a bright wealth of divine benedictions?

Throw the power of a true man's solemnized sympathy into your reading of that service.

Of the ritual of the Grave I hardly need to speak. I know only too well that there are funerals and funerals. There are occasions of unrelieved sadness. There are occasions when the Minister's heart is chilled by a manifest and utter indifference. But the saddest, dreariest of burials is an opportunity for the Lord. Whether or no you see your way to give an address, let it be seen that you are dealing with God in the prayers, and read the Lessons "as one that pleadeth with men."

A brief word in passing on the problem raised by some of the phrases of our Burial Service. Let me call attention to the studied generality of the words, *In sure and certain hope of the resurrection to eternal life.* Before 1662 this ran "in sure . . . hope *of resurrection*, etc.," which, as you will observe, expressly applied the "hope" to *that* case of burial; the change was evidently made on purpose to relieve conscience in the matter. Then remember that the whole service is constructed, like all our services, for the member of the

Christian community taken on his profession; and that assumption, unless flagrant facts withstand it, is to be made, in public ordinance, as much at the grave as elsewhere. And do not forget that *hope*, be it ever so "trembling,' is *never* forbidden at a grave-side. I am no advocate of what is called "the larger hope"; I dare not be. But I am deeply convinced that mercies of the Lord, in cases quite beyond our possible knowledge, are experienced in the very act of departure.

> "Betwixt the stirrup and the ground
> Mercy I sought, mercy I found."

That instance has many parallels; and God only knows their limits. Never should we say, whatever we may awfully fear, that such and such a soul is *to our knowledge* lost.

As regards the practical management of extreme cases, the young Clergyman will of course act altogether under his Incumbent. And the young Incumbent will remember that he can have recourse to his Bishop for counsel.

iv. Let me say one special word on our administration of the precious ritual of the

Table of the Lord. I am not attempting here any discussion of its doctrinal aspects in detail. For myself, as I have said elsewhere, I make no secret of long-settled "Evangelical" convictions. I regard the Holy Eucharist as above all things else the Lord's way of sealing to His true Israel the unutterable benefits of the New and Everlasting Covenant, rather than an occasion on which He infuses into them His glorified Manhood. His sacred Body and Blood are, for me, the Body and the Blood *as they were*, once for all, at Calvary, and as they are not therefore literally now; and my participation in them is accordingly my participation in the virtues of the Atoning Sacrifice, there once and for ever wrought and offered. But this is by the way. I speak now of our spirit and manner in the administration, in respect of some principles which are little if at all affected, it seems to me, by even grave differences of doctrinal theory. Alas, at the present day it is too often the case that the communicant is fairly bewildered by the varieties of Communion ritual, or by the complications of it. Ought this to be so, on *any*

theory of the Eucharist? Did I for one believe our adorable and beloved LORD to be locally present (I use the words not technically but practically) on the Holy Table as nowhere else here on earth, I think that all my instinct would go towards a reverence whose depth was manifested not by an elaborate ceremonial but by the most solemn possible simplicity of act. A ritual whose details must be matter of careful practice, and which suggests almost the need of a Spanish master-of-the-ceremonies—ought *that* to be the natural effect of an, as it were, visible Presence?

But probably I write for readers whose inclinations or risks lie little in that direction. And for them I say, let your administration of the blessed Communion always combine a manifest reverence and a restful simplicity. The Lord *is* there, the Master of His own Table, the Prince of His own Covenant, ready to give His people His royal Seal by your hands. And His people are there, to have their sacred interview with Him. Do not obstruct their view, their colloquy; humbly aid it. Be their servant, as in HIS presence;

obtrude yourself as little as you possibly can.

As I draw the chapter to a close, I make one practical recommendation to my younger Brethren. It is, to do what they can to interest their people in the Prayer Book, and to promote its intelligent use, by taking what opportunities they can to talk to them about it. Many a private occasion for this will no doubt present itself. But if now and then a simple lecture on the history of the Prayer Book can be given, and if possible well illustrated, it will be very useful; and so will be a series of week-night devotional addresses on the teaching of the Prayer Book. And let not the need of plain matter-of-fact explanation of obsolete terms and technical phrases be forgotten on such occasions. Of course the Curate will carefully consult his Incumbent on the whole matter. But few of my elder Brethren will not feel with me that such "talks upon the Prayer Book," carefully considered and conducted, whether by Incumbent or by Curate, may be of the greatest use, under our Master's blessing.

One last word, and I have done with these suggestions. An English Bishop once told me that he had lately met a gentleman who, after ten years' residence abroad, returned to England, and to his place as a worshipper in our Churches. "Do you remark particularly any change or advance in what you see there?" "I observe on the one hand much more ceremonial, on the other hand, apparently, much less worship. Fewer kneel, fewer respond, fewer around me seem devoutly attentive." Less worship! Is it so indeed? Let the very opposite be the case, so far as our influence and teaching can have effect, with our fathers' Prayer Book in our hands, and in our hearts.

"*Lo, God is here; Him day and night*
Th' united quires of angels sing;
To Him, enthron'd above all height,
Heaven's hosts their noblest praises bring;
Disdain not, Lord, our meaner song,
Who praise Thee with a stammering tongue.

'*Being of beings, may our praise*
Thy courts with grateful fragrance fill;
Still may we stand before Thy face,
Still hear and do Thy sovereign will;
To Thee may all our thoughts arise,
Ceaseless, accepted sacrifice."

J. WESLEY, from TERSTEEGEN

CHAPTER X.

PREACHING (i.).

Earthen vessels, frail and slight,
Yet the golden Lamp we bear;
Master, break us, that the light
So may fire the murky air;
Skill and wisdom none we claim,
Only seek to lift Thy Name.

CHAPTER X.

PREACHING (i.).

I HAVE on purpose reserved the subject of Preaching for our closing pages. Preaching is, from many points of view, the goal and summing up of all other parts and works of the Ministry. What we have said already about the Clergyman's life and labour, in secret, in society, in the parish; what we have said about his study and use of the Book of Common Prayer; all, so far as it has been true, ought to contribute its suggestions as we approach this great theme.

For, indeed, "the Pulpit" (I use the word in its widest application, wide enough to cover the mission-room desk, or the preaching place in the open air) is no mere isolated item in the midst of other matters which call for a Clergyman's attention. If the man is working, and

ordering his work, aright, the Pulpit will not be a something which has to be taken by the way, a link in a long chain in which committees, clubs, and social gatherings, and the like, are other and co-ordinate links. It will be a sacred central point, the living heart of the busy life, to which everything will bear relation. To the Pulpit everything will somehow converge, and from the Pulpit everything will be influenced. As the Pastor moves about amongst his people, he will be gathering incessantly, from all parochial places and seasons, material which will tell upon his sermons; he will be getting to know his people's minds and lives with an intimacy which will give his preaching to them a point which otherwise it could not have. And when he stands in the Pulpit, this continually accumulating knowledge will come out, not indeed in the way of diluting or distorting his Gospel, but so as to give its eternal and holy message a point and closeness of application which will ensure its "coming home," as God gives the blessing.

It needs thought and care to keep the parish and the sermon thus *en rapport.* But

such thought and care is infinitely well worth taking. The Clergyman who longs to be useful for his Lord in the highest degree he can be, cannot possibly think lightly of his sermons. Yet he may be tempted, half unconsciously, to treat them too lightly in practices, particularly if he is beset with a consciousness that he is not "a born preacher," or if he stands in the opposite danger of having a "fatal" facility of speech. Let the Clergyman only remember that his sermon, his public delivery of instruction, of exhortation, in the Lord's name, is not to be an exhibition of his own powers of thought or utterance, but a faithful message-bearing to his own flock, in the light of what he knows of Christ and the Word on the one side, and of the needs of the flock on the other, and he will find a most useful encouragement, or a most useful corrective, as the need may be. "O my Lord, I am not eloquent," Exod. iv. 10. will be no disheartening thought, as he carries to the pulpit the ever-growing weight of pastoral experience, all giving point and freshness to the unalterable message. And the secret temptation to think the sermon a light thing

because mere words come easy, will be powerfully counteracted in the other case not only by contact with the realities of life in the daily work, but by remembering that the sermon will have to do with not an abstract audience but *these particular* souls and lives thus laid on the man's conscience and affections.

Let me repeat it as earnestly as I can. The sermon, if it is to be what it should be, should be affected at every point by the facts of the preacher's own inner life, and by those of his intercourse with his people. Those facts must, of course, be thoughtfully weighed and handled. The tact which is so important in a Pastor, and which is best learned and developed in the school of Christ's love, will see instinctively how to apply in preaching the experience gained in prayer, in conversation, in every branch of ministering life. We shall remember that indefinite harm, not good, may be done when a man, particularly a young man, unwisely preaches what may fairly seem to be personalities; I have known some sad instances in point here. But taking that for granted, assuming the good sense and sympathy of

the preacher, I am quite sure that the most eloquent sermon, adapted to *any* audience, is far less likely to be blessed and used by our Lord than the sermon which is penetrated with the Pastor's personal intimacy with *that particular* audience, and which goes therefore straight from him to them.

It has been well said that preaching may be described as "truth through personality"; not merely the presentation somehow of so many facts and thoughts, but the presentation of them through the medium of a living man, who brings into the pulpit his heart, his character, his experience, and so gives out his message. We may add to this suggestive dictum that the true pastoral sermon is also "truth *to* personalities"; the living man's delivery of the message to living men and women whose life, more or less, he knows. And so it presupposes some real amount of pastoral intercourse, intelligently brought to bear on pulpit work.

I linger a little over these thoughts, though they are little more than introductory. For experience tells me how easily, in these days,

the Clergyman is tempted to dislocate his "parish work" from his sermons, to the great loss of one or both parts of his duty. And if once he begins to think of his sermons as a thing really apart, which must be got through somehow, but rather as a mere duty than as a vital ministerial function, the results will be sad for the sermons. So I lay stress on the thought that the sermon-preparation ought to go on not only in the study, over the Word, but in the parish, over the hearers of it. The more constantly this is recollected, and put in practice, the less fear will there be that the sermon will be a weariness either to people or to preacher.

But let me, however, entreat my younger Brother, by any and every means, to watch and pray against a slack or low view of his function as a preacher. From very many quarters at the present day we are invited to slight our sermon-labour. Sometimes it is "work," organization, committees, which is set against the sermon; sometimes it is the reading-desk and the Communion Table—the liturgical functions of the Ministry. Let

pastoral activities and holy rites alike have ample place in our thoughts and work; but for Christ's sake, my Brother in the ministry of the Word and Sacraments, do not forget the Word. A Christian Church where preaching sinks to a low ebb, where the labour of public teaching and exhortation is neglected, in favour either of machinery or ritual, cannot possibly—I dare to say it deliberately—be in a truly healthy state now, and most assuredly is not laying up health and strength for years to come. For the very life of our flocks, and of our Church, and for the dear glory of our Master, let us "labour in the Word and teaching." 1 Tim. v. 17.

Is it necessary, in the case of any reader of these pages, that I should not only appeal thus in general, but add one special entreaty—always to preach *your own* sermons? Probably it is not necessary; but it may be "safe" nevertheless. Not long ago I was distressed to read, in the advertisement columns of an excellent Church newspaper, a conspicuous announcement of a series of "*litho sermons*," that is, I suppose, sermons so printed as to Phil. iii. 2.

look like manuscript. If such literature has a sale, it is a miserable fact. Can these discourses possibly be either written by a "man of the Spirit," or used by such a man? I say, No. The production of them (in order to be lithographed), and the use of them in their "litho" state, are untruthful acts, untruthful in the very sanctuary of truth. The Lord pardon—and the Lord forbid!

Better the most stammering and incoherent utterances of a man who loves the Lord, and the Word, and the flock, and who in Christ's Name does his best, than the unhallowed, and usually, I think, vapid glibness of such acted as well as spoken falsehoods.[1] And surely, the more the Clergyman keeps his pulpit and his parish in living relation, the less will he be tempted, be it ever so remotely, by any exigencies, to dream of expedients such as these.

Quite conceivably, there may be rare occasions when another man's sermon may be

[1] I am far from saying that the preacher should never get help from other men's sermons. This may be done honestly and usefully, in many ways. But to let another man's sermon pass as one's own is a sin.

rightly used by you. But then, of course, you will do it honestly and above-board, telling your people whose it is. In Addison's *Sir Roger de Coverley* there is a pleasant scene, where the venerable Knight asks the Parson who the preacher for next Sunday is to be. "The Bishop of St Asaph in the morning," replies the good man, "and Dr South in the afternoon."[1] That is, he was about to read, openly and honestly, a sermon of Beveridge's, and then a sermon of South's; neither, certainly, in lithograph. I do not say he did the best for his people in so doing; most certainly he could not "speak home" to the details of their village life, and its temptations, if he spoke only in the phrase of the two classical pulpit-masters. That *rapport* of parish and pulpit of which I have spoken could not have been much felt, at least on that coming Sunday. But the good Parson was honest,

[1] "He then shewed us his list of preachers for the whole year, where I saw with a great deal of pleasure Archbishop Tillotson, Bishop Sanderson, Dr Barrow, Dr Calamy, with several living authors." (*Spectator*, No. 106, July 2nd, 1711.) Calamy by the way was a Presbyterian, made one of the King's chaplains at the Restoration.

however. The practice of which I speak is not honest.

Let me come now to a closer view of the preacher's work, and I will be as practical as possible. I have besought my Brother to let nothing tempt him to push his preaching into a neglectful corner. Let me now beseech him to remember that he must not only be a diligent preacher, but do his very best to commend his preaching to his people,—to be, in a right sense, *attractive.*

I deliberately say, attractive. That word, of course, suggests some very undesirable applications. It is only too possible to aim at attractiveness by bad methods. We may tone down the Gospel-message, leaving out unpopular and man-humbling truths, and try to "attract" people so. We may strive to "attract" them to hear us by doubtful external accessories (of very different kinds), which, after all, will rather attract attention—for a season—to themselves, than to the message, and the Lord. But none the less it is every Clergyman's plain duty to make his preaching, so far as he can, lawfully attractive. It is his

duty to see that he preaches Christ Crucified; and "the offence of the Cross" will Gal. v. 11. always occur, sooner or later, in such preaching; but it is his duty to see that there is no other "offence" in it, so far as he can help it. If he so speaks of sin, and righteousness, and judgment, that the unregenerate heart does not like it, though the preacher has spoken wisely and in love, that is not the preacher's fault. If he has so magnified Christ, and the glory and fulness of His salvation, that it sounds like exaggeration to the unspiritual hearer, though the words have been said in all reverent reality, that is not the preacher's fault. But it *is* his fault if he has repelled his hearers from his message by what is not the message, but his own setting of it; his spirit, manner, his delivery, his neglect of some plain precautions against prejudice and weariness. Of a few such precautions I come now to speak; and first, of what I may call the most external amongst them.

Beginning, then, with physical precautions against needless "offences," σκάνδαλα, in our preaching I say first, let us do our best to be *audible*.

The word sounds almost amusingly commonplace. But it must be said. Many more of us Clergymen than know it, or think about it, are not audible. The lack of training for the bodily work of the pulpit, in our Church, is serious; far more is done in this way among our Nonconformist brethren.[1] And accordingly there are numbers of young English Clergymen who read and speak without a thought of methodical audibility. They do not articulate distinctly. They do not remember that the *pace* and *force* of utterance, fit for a private room, are quite unfit for a large building. They do not know, perhaps, how extremely important is the articulation of consonants, and of final syllables of words, and of closing words in a sentence. They do not know that a certain equability (not monotony) of voice is necessary, if the utterance is to "carry" to the end of a long church, or a church of many pillars.

[1] Let me cordially commend the Rev. J. P. Sandlands' book, *The Voice and Public Speaking*. Mr Sandlands has done, and is doing, admirable work as an oral teacher of clerical elocution, in the intervals of his parochial labours.

Or again, they do not know, or do not remember, that audibility is not secured by mere loudness and bigness of voice, nor again by raising the voice to a high pitch. "People tell you to speak up," said that excellent elocutionist, Mr Simeon; "but I say, speak down," down as regards the musical scale. Again, the larger the building the more accentuated must be the articulation, and the more limited the variation of pitch; but too often this is not thought of by the preacher.

Further, it has to be remembered, but it is frequently forgotten, that the audibility we should aim at is a pleasant and attractive audibility. It is a great thing to be easily heard; which of us does not know the combined physical and mental labour of listening to a sermon, or a speech, which only reaches us indistinctly? But it is a greater thing to be pleasantly heard; heard so that the listener finds nothing to tire and repel in the utterance. Here, of course, different voices give very different advantages; but there are some common secrets, so to speak, which all—who will make a sacred business of it—may profitably and

effectively use. Above all, there is the secret of quiet naturalness; the watchful avoidance (do not forget this) of tricks and mannerisms in delivery;[1] the watchful cultivation of the sort of utterance which we should use in an earnest conversation on grave subjects, with only such differences as are suggested by *the size* of the place in which we speak. Of some other "common secrets" I shall speak when I come to the question of style and phrase.

How shall we best work upon such hints? Very largely, by the use of the plainest common-sense and every-day observation on our own part. But largely also by trying to find some friend, equally kind and candid, who will help us "to hear ourselves as others hear us." For myself, after twenty-five years, I welcome more and more gratefully every such criticism as the occasion presents itself. Let the Curate ask his Vicar to tell him without mercy if his utterance, his articulation, is clear; if his manner is natural; if his preaching is or is not

[1] I have known a sermon which in matter and style were really excellent made, to some hearers at least, almost unendurable by the accident that the preacher had got the habit of (needlessly) *clearing his throat* at the end of almost every sentence.

easy to listen to in these respects. And let friend ask friend; let pastor ask parishioner; let husband ask wife!

There are other directions in which we must cultivate attractiveness. There is English style. Here, again, gifts differ widely in detail, yet there are common secrets open to common use. It is open to every one to avoid, on the one hand, an ambitious, long-worded style; on the other, a style which many young men of our time are in more danger of patronizing—the slovenly, shapeless style, in which the Queen's English is very "freely handled," and into which the broken English of an ever-growing *slang* not seldom makes its way. These defects have only to be recognized, surely, to be avoided, by keeping our eyes open as we read and our ears as we hear, and by remembering that the sacred message of the King, while it is too great to be tricked out with false rhetoric, is also too great to be slighted, not to say insulted, by a really careless phraseology.

Pains will be needed, of course, as we pursue the object of a good style. We must watch and think. We must read and observe good

models, the written words of men who have proved themselves powerful preachers to the people, and indeed of men generally who are known masters of English. We shall have, again, to consult candid friends. But my point is, that all this is abundantly worth our while. A neat, straight, well-worded sentence is not a mere literary luxury. It is a practical power. It is far easier to listen to than a careless, formless sentence is, and it is far easier to remember. The truth which it conveys is much more likely, therefore, to find its way securely into the mind, and to lie there ready for the vivifying touch of the Spirit of God.

I emphasize this matter of style, for in many quarters it is much neglected, and some of my younger Brethren do, if I mistake not, entertain the thought that the simplicity of the Gospel is best set forth, and God most honoured, where plans and methods of language are neglected. To speak about "a good style" to those who think so, may seem perhaps little else than a recommendation to bid for human applause in the line of literature. But my intention is far enough from this. Mere literary ambition, the

quest of the glory of self in this as in every other line, is a forbidden thing to the true bond-servant of the Lord. But it is by no means forbidden him, for his Lord's sake, to aim at clearness, point, force of expression, that the message may be the better taken in. God is as little glorified by a bad style as by a bad voice, or bad handwriting, or bad reasoning. And by a good style I mean not a style polished and elaborated to please fastidious tastes (the best taste, by the way, is best pleased with correct simplicity), but a style which shall be both pure and plain in word and phrase, "understandable of the people" yet such as not to vex those who care for their native tongue, and just enough formed and pointed to make attention pleasant to the ear. For average audiences, I know no style more perfectly answering my idea than that of Mr Spurgeon,[1] in his printed sermons of recent years. And I happen to know that Mr. Spurgeon has always taken great and systematic pains with his English.

[1] Since these words were written this great Christian and preacher has passed away to his Master's presence.

Some preachers need much more than others a hint to keep their sentences *straight*, and to avoid the tangle of parentheses, long or short. Here, again, Mr Spurgeon gives me an admirable illustration. His sentences, never thin or weak in matter, are always straight. If any of my younger Brethren are tempted, as I confess I am, in the digressive direction, I would recommend them (if they usually preach without writing) to *write* a sermon now and then, and rigorously to exclude, or re-write, all sentences which transgress. It occurred to me recently, when acting as a summer chaplain in Switzerland, to find the benefit of a different corrective. On one particular Sunday I had among my hearers in the morning a French Presbyterian, in the afternoon a French Roman Catholic, each understanding a little English; and in each case I had special reasons for hope and longing that the sermon might bring some spiritual help. Instinctively, I avoided every expression which could in the least complicate my English and thus obscure the message to my foreign friends. And so thankful was I for the pruning of periods that resulted, that

I am much disposed, in all future preaching, to put mentally before me those same two hearers.

On that great question, Shall I preach from writing, or not? I say very little. Speaking quite generally, and thinking now only of the regular church congregation, not of the mission-room or open air, I would advise my younger Brethren to write for some while, but usually with an ultimate view to speech without writing. No hard rule can be laid down. One man is so gifted that from the first he can express himself correctly and well without any manuscript before him. Another finds, all his life through, that he speaks best, and his people listen best, when he reads (vividly and naturally) from his prayerfully-prepared manuscript. But on the whole, I repeat it, writing is the best discipline for a man in his early days of Ministry, while beyond doubt the freely-spoken sermon, like the freely-spoken speech, (carefully enough prepared as to matter and order,) is usually best to listen to, and therefore should be the preacher's goal. Some men write their sermons and then learn them by heart for delivery. For myself, I

own this would be a severe ordeal to nerve; and in very few cases, if I am right, does it produce a perfectly natural effect. Not long ago, if not now, it was a frequent custom in Scotland; and one amusing story comes to my mind. A good minister, known to a near relative of mine, always thus "mandated" his sermon, and punctually delivered it word for word. One day a tremendous hailstorm assailed the church windows, and not only did his parishioners fail to hear him, but literally he lost the sound of his own voice. Yet he *dared not stop*, lest memory should play him false; and when the storm ceased, "I found myself," he said, "with some surprise, in a quite distant part of the sermon."

Another important aid to attractiveness is order and division, simply and sensibly managed. Nothing is much more repellent, at least to modern hearers, than an excess of arrangement; headings and subdivisions overdone. But nothing is more helpful to attention than a simple, natural, luminous division, present in the preacher's mind, announced to the audience, and faithfully carried out. Remember this, among many other things, in the choosing of

the text; *ceteris paribus*, that text is best which best lends itself to natural division.

There are many other points, more or less of the exterior kind, so to speak, which concern the attractiveness of our preaching. There is the question of length, which can only be settled by careful and prayerful consideration of special circumstances, with recollection of the general principles that the morning sermon should be short compared with that of the evening, and that he who would reach the hearts of the poor must not give them "sermonettes," but sermons. There is the question of action, a large subject. All that I can say is, that *some* action is almost always a help to attention, but that it proves the very opposite as soon as it seems uneasy, or a mannerism.

I have yet to deal with some thoughts about the preacher's message, and the inmost secrets of his power. Meanwhile, may our Lord and Master enable us so to "labour in the Word" that we shall think no means too humble which will really help us to make His message plain, and no dependence on Him too absolute for the longed-for spiritual results.

"*Would I describe a preacher, such as Paul,*
Were he on earth, would hear, approve, and own,
Paul should himself direct me. I would trace
His master-strokes, and draw from his design.
I would express him simple, grave, sincere,
In doctrine uncorrupt; in language plain,
And plain in manner; decent, solemn, chaste,
And natural in gesture; much impress'd
Himself, as conscious of his awful charge,
And anxious mainly that the flock he feeds
May feel it too; affectionate in look,
And tender in address, as well becomes
A messenger of grace to guilty men."

COWPER.

CHAPTER XI.

PREACHING (ii.).

For Thy sake, beloved Lord,
I will labour in Thy Word;
On the knees, in patient prayer;
At the desk, with studious care;
In the pulpit, seeking still
There to utter all Thy will.

CHAPTER XI.

PREACHING (ii.).

I PURSUE the subject of attractive preaching, taking still the word attractive in its worthiest sense, and again laying stress on the *necessity* of attractiveness of the right sort. We have looked a little already at some of the external requisites to this end; now let us approach some which have to do with matter more than manner.

On the way, I pause to say a word in general on one of the reasons why we should do our best to speak so that our hearers shall care to hear. The supreme reason is manifest; it is the glory of our Master and the good of souls. For His sake, and for the flock's sake, we long and must strive to speak so as to draw their attention to His message and to Himself. But subordinate to this great motive, and in fullest harmony with it, there is another; and

this is a motive which, once clearly apprehended, will affect not our preaching only, but all parts of our ministry—our conduct of public worship, our pastoral visitation, our whole intercourse with our neighbours. I mean, the simple motive of a loyal and faithful *considerateness for others*, as we are on the one hand Christian men and English gentlemen, and on the other hand servants, not masters, of the Church and parish. Possibly this aspect of the Pastor's public and official ministry may not have presented itself distinctively as yet to my younger Brother; but it cannot be recognized and acted upon too early. Some things in our clerical position and functions tend in their own nature to make us forget it, if we are not definitely awake to it beforehand. In some respects the Clergyman, even the youngest Curate, has dangerous opportunities for *in*considerate public action. Take the management of divine Service in illustration. In his manner of reading, his tone, his pace, the Clergyman may allow himself, only too easily, to think of himself alone. In the reading-desk, or at the Table of the Lord, he may consult only his own

likes and dislikes in attitude, gesture, and air. But if so, he is greatly failing in the homely duty of loyal considerateness. What will be most for the happiness and edification of the congregation? What will least disturb and most assist true devotion? How shall the Minister best secure that the worshippers shall remember the Master and not be uncomfortably conscious of the servant? The answers to such questions will of course vary considerably under varying conditions; but it is *the principle* of the questions which I press home. Our office, and the common consent and usage of the Christian people, give us a position of independence in such matters which has its advantages, but also its very great risks; and it is for us accordingly to handle that independence with the utmost possible *considerateness.*

This thought was much upon my own mind lately during the interesting experiences of a Continental summer chaplaincy, to which I referred in the last chapter. As usual in a health resort abroad, the English residents represented many different shades of Church opinion and practice. By the convictions of

many long years, I am an Evangelical Churchman, in the well-understood sense of the term; and of those convictions I am not at all ashamed. My manner of conducting public worship, especially in the Communion Office, would probably make it plain at once to most worshippers where I stand as a Churchman. But that does not mean, I trust, that I am to allow myself to be inconsiderate of the feelings of others in the matter; and on the occasions referred to it was my earnest and anxious aim to remember this with regard to worshippers, and particularly communicants, whose beliefs, or however whose sympathies, were what is called "higher" than my own. On their account I sought to make it plain that no rubrical direction was neglectfully treated by me, and that reverence of manner and action was a sacred thing in my eyes—a reverence not elaborated, but attentive. I hope I should have been reverently careful whatever the composition of the congregation was; but under the circumstances the duty of this obvious sort of ministerial *considerateness* was laid on my heart with special weight. That duty bears

in many directions. It is, I venture to say, inconsiderate, on the one hand, when the Clergyman conducts the services of the Church with a disturbing artificiality of performance. It is inconsiderate, on the other hand, when he conducts them with any, even the least, real slovenliness and inattention.

But if all this is true of the desk and of the blessed Table, it is true also, and in a high degree, of the pulpit. Singularly independent, up to a certain point, is the position of the preacher. He chooses his own text; he assigns himself (at least in theory) his own length of discourse; he is entitled, under the ægis of the law of the land, to speak on to the end without interruption; he is bound, within the limits of a sanctified common-sense, to speak with the authority of his commission. Here are powerful temptations to an inconsiderate man, perhaps especially to an inconsiderate young man, to show much inconsideration. And therefore, here is a pre-eminent occasion for the true Pastor, who thinks, prays, loves, and is humble, to practise the beautiful opposite. Shall you and I seek grace to do so?

Put yourself often, my dear Brother, while I do the same, into the position—which we once occupied always, and often do still—of the hearer. You, the Curate, or the young Incumbent, have recently come into the parish, and you are full of a young man's energy and enterprize, and a little infected perhaps with a common and natural belief of your time of life, but a belief not quite true to facts, that the world is made for young men. And among your hearers, week by week, as you preach from that pulpit, sit men and women who were working, and thinking, and perhaps believing, literally long before you were born. Put yourself in their place. Into many of their experiences, and their sympathies born of experience, you cannot possibly enter personally. You cannot *feel personally* how this or that innovation of language or manner, this or that too crude statement of your message, this or that baldly new and perhaps by no means true theory, aired as if it were all obvious and of course, must look and sound to them. You cannot *feel* it all; but you can think about it. Perhaps these are educated

and refined people, and accustomed all their lives to value clear thought and pure diction, in any case accustomed to carefulness in the matter and manner of the sermon. You cannot enter into all their mental habits in your own mental workings; but you can take account of them, and in a loyal and thoughtful *considerateness* you can remember them in practice, and honestly aim so to prepare and to preach as to conciliate the thoughtful and the elders.

Such considerateness will not mean the stifling of prayerful conviction, or the failure to be faithful as the messenger of the Lord. But it will mean a severity upon yourself as regards the tone and spirit of your thoughts, and also as the manner of your utterance. You will take pains, even at a heavy cost to self (and such costs are always gains in the end), so to minister as to attract the attention of the flock, not to yourself, but to your blessed Master and His Word; preaching "not yourself, but Christ Jesus as Lord, and *yourself their servant* for Jesus' sake." 2 Cor. iv. 5.

With this aim of Attractiveness, then, in our minds, and with this motive of Considerateness

beside it, let us come to some thoughts in detail about the matter of preaching.

And here first I must bring in another word to meet the word "attractive." That word is "faithful."

As a matter of most obvious fact (we noticed it in the previous chapter), there is a false and useless attractiveness, as well as a true. There is the poor and miserable attractiveness—it draws a certain class of modern hearers—of mere brevity; the "ten-minute sermon." There are no doubt exceptional occasions when ten minutes, or even five, may be the right limit to our utterance; but there is something wrong with both sermon and audience if in the regular ministration of God's holy Word the preacher must at once begin to stop. There is again the specious and spurious attractiveness of excitement and froth of manner, or of a merely emotional appeal to perhaps not the deepest emotions, an attraction which has little in it of that divine magnet which draws the will and lifts the soul in regenerate faith and surrender. There is the attraction, tempting, but futile for the true

purposes of the pulpit, of the sermon which is after all only a lecture, or a leading article; full of the topics of the day, of the hour; full perhaps of some celebrated name just immortalized by death[1]; but not full of the eternal message for which the pulpit exists. Most certainly there is no divine rule which excludes from the sermon all allusions to politics, to society, to science, to great men; but there *is* a divine rule, running through the whole precept and example of the New Testament, which keeps such things always subordinate to the supreme work of preaching Jesus Christ.

Across all our thoughts how to secure attractiveness, as a co-ordinate line which fixes attention to the true point, runs the word "Faithfulness." The preacher is to be attractive while faithful, faithful while attractive. And he is to be attractive not for the sake of so being, but in order that he may win an entrance for the words of faithfulness, to his Master's praise.

Yes, this is what we are to be as preachers

[1] "I went longing to hear about Christ, and it was only Newman from beginning to end." This was the actual lament of an anxious soul, one Sunday in 1890.

We are to seek "mercy of the Lord to be
1 Cor. vii. 25. faithful." We are not popular leaders, looking for a cry, or passing one on. We are not speculative thinkers, feeling out a philosophy, communicating our guesses at truth to a company of friends who happen to be interested in the investigation. We are "messengers, watchmen, and stewards of the Lord." We are in commissioned charge of a divine, authentic, and unalterable message. We are
1 Pet. i. 23. the expounders of a "Word which liveth and abideth for ever," a Word which man is always trying to judge and to disparage,
Joh. xii. 48. but which will judge man at the last day. We are the bondservants of an absolute Master, who is at once our Sender and our Message, and who overhears our every word in its delivery.

It is a grave mistake, as we saw in our last chapter, to think that faithfulness means a
Tit. i. 9. repellent utterance of "the faithful Word." But it is at least an equal mistake to think that attractiveness means a modification of that Word, which to the end of our
1 Cor. i. 23. world's day will still be a "folly" and

a "stumbling-block," in some respects, to the unconverted soul, and will always have its searching point and edge for the converted soul also.

But this consideration here is only by the way. I return from it to the matter of a right and faithful attractiveness and some of its higher conditions.

"*Preach the Gospel—earnestly, interestingly, fully.*" Such, I believe, is the prescription given, by the great preacher whom I cited in the last chapter, to the Pastor who would fill his church, and keep it full. In the first instance, no doubt, Mr Spurgeon gives it as a prescription to the Nonconformist Pastor; but it is quite as much to the purpose for the Conformist, so far as he is a Minister of the Word.[1] What I have to say in these present pages shall run on the lines of that sentence of good counsel.

i. "*Preach the Gospel,*" that is to say Jesus Christ, in His Person, His Work, His Offices,

[1] And let it never be forgotten that this is his *primary* function in the mind of the Church of England. See the Priest's Ordination, particularly its Exhortations, its Commission, and its final Collect.

His Teaching, all applied to the souls and lives of men. Would you truly and permanently attract, with an attraction which God will bless? Let that be your first condition. I do not dilate upon it here, but with all the earnestness possible I lay it upon my younger Brother's heart as we pass on. Preach the Gospel, that is to say the Lord, in all He is for man as man is a sinner, a mortal, a mourner, a worker. Do not let Christ be one subject among others. As little can the sun be one among the planets. He is *the* Subject; all others get their reality and importance for us preachers by their relation to Him. In particular I venture to say, do not let occasional, temporal, local topics, even very important ones, dislodge Christ, the Lord Jesus Christ of the whole Bible, from His royal place in your preaching; and do not forget continually (though not monotonously) to keep to the front the fact that He is *the sinner's Saviour*. More will be said later about that point of view, but I state it at once. Speak indeed of Christ as Exemplar, Ideal, Friend, Man of Men; but do not let your brethren forget that, "*first of all, Christ*

died for our sins, according to the Scriptures," and that His primary practical relation to us is always that of Saviour to sinner. That truth is not altogether in fashion now. But it is eternal; it is deep as the human soul, and as the Law of God, and as such it is a mighty condition to attractiveness, wisely and truly handled. It corresponds to the inmost facts of the hearers' being, whether they are aware of it yet or not; and is there not here the most powerful of magnets, at least *in posse*? 1 Cor. xv. 3.

ii. "Preach the Gospel *earnestly*." This does not mean necessarily with vehemence, or even with fervour, of manner. Some men's delivery is fervent, or even vehement, in the most natural way possible; and let such men preach so, if they will do it thoughtfully and to the purpose. But the slightest artificial cultivation of such qualities, or of the semblance of them, is a great practical mistake. And earnestness is at once a wider and a simpler matter all the while. The man who preaches earnestly is the man who is altogether in earnest, and speaks out his conviction and his purpose.

He is the man who has the Lord's message deep in his own soul, and is conscious of its vast importance for the souls of others. He is the man who does not merely discuss, or explain, or even expound, however soundly and luminously, but whose words—well chosen, well weighed, well ordered—are *also* the living
Joh. iii. 11. words of one who "testifieth that he hath seen." Yes, the essence of the right sort of earnestness is the witness-character of the preacher. What is a witness? One who has personal knowledge of the matter of his words
2 Tim. i. 12. —"*I know whom I have believed.*" Is there not a great need at this time, in our dear Church, of more such witness-preaching? I do not mean preaching that advertises the preacher as a remarkable Christian, certainly not preaching that puts for one moment our "testimony" on a level with the infallible Word once written. But I do mean the preaching which, by one of the surest laws of our nature, attracts attention to that Word in a living way by the preacher's manifest confession that its message is a mighty reality and certainty to himself.

Some years ago I heard an account of the peculiarly impressive preaching of a young Mission-clergyman. It was described to me as remarkable not for energy of manner, or warmth of diction, but for the impression left on all hearers that the truths handled by the man were for himself absolute and present facts. He stated them with a directness and quietness which was emphatically matter-*of-fact*. This sort of preaching is earnest indeed.

iii. "Preach the Gospel *interestingly*." How shall we secure this? Some recipes for interest are familiar. There is the method of illustration; there is the method of anecdote: both excellent, and almost indispensable. Only, they are methods which have their risks, and must be used with care. Illustrations are apt to overwhelm the thing illustrated, the moment much detail is allowed; and they are apt to go on three feet, or even upon one, instead of upon four; and they may be drawn from quarters too remote to strike the hearers with effect. Anecdotes have the same risks; and, besides, they need, if they are to be used aright, to be carefully sifted and verified. I

say this not to disparage what in some preachers' hands is a most powerful and also a most delicate weapon; yet the caution is certainly needed, especially by younger men.

But the surest secrets of interesting preaching lie deeper than anecdote and illustration. One of them, a very simple one to state, is clearness of thought, and of the expression and explanation of thought. I entreat my Brother to be an *explanatory* preacher, by which I mean, not that he should treat his *brethren* as if they were his *children* (unless indeed it is a children's sermon), but that he should handle familiar religious terms with the resolve to make them *live and speak* to the ordinary hearer. Nothing is more opiate-like than a sentence which is unreal to the hearer because it is mere phraseology. Nothing can be made more interesting than familiar phraseology (supposing it to be true and important) so treated as to speak its meaning out fresh and living in modern ears.

Another deep and unfailing secret of interest, so that it be used intelligently and prayerfully, is close akin to this last. It lies in the right

sort of *expository* preaching. I have in my mind such exposition as will be found in Dr Vaughan's sermons on the Philippian Epistle. The charm and power of those sermons lie, I know, very much in the extraordinary excellence, the *curiosa simplicitas*, of their literary style, so unpretentious and so masterly. But it lies also in the fact that the preacher takes us over a familiar Scripture passage, verse by verse, phrase by phrase, and translates it into the dialect of present circumstances. Let me heartily commend this sort of preaching from my own parochial experience in past days. In a congregation consisting chiefly of the poor, I found that the most intelligent and sustained interest was excited by a series of Sunday evening sermons on a selected chapter or paragraph, in which the aim was first to paraphrase the sacred phrases, as it were, into modern shapes, and then at the close to enforce some main message of the portion. The method is as old as the Homilies of Chrysostom, and older.

Another secret of interest, permanent and effectual, is *practicality* in preaching. I protest, whenever I can, and I hope to do so to

the last, against the common but unhappy fallacy of an outcry against doctrine: "*Give us not a creed, but a life.*" The whole New Testament, the whole Bible, protests against such a sentence. There, a divine creed is always seen as necessary for a divine life. Supernatural facts, livingly apprehended, are necessary for supernatural peace and power in this formidable natural world. But then, on the other side, it is a fallacy almost as fatal to preach the supernatural fact and truth without a constant and practical application of them to the crude and stern realities of life. A young pastoral preacher was once, in my hearing, warmly and lovingly thanked for his pulpit-work, on the eve of his quitting his Curacy; and the point on which his humble friends dwelt was that he had always preached Christ, *and* always showed them how to make use of His presence and power in the actual circumstances of their lives. Eloquent words, aye and true words, spoken *in vacuo*, will be dull to most hearers; eternal truths laid alongside the weekday work and temptation will always be interesting.

iv. "Preach the Gospel *fully*." Here is our great Nonconformist's last adverb, in his recipe for attractive preaching. Its point is not so obvious perhaps as that of the other words, but it is nobly true. "The Gospel" is, as I have said, and as we know, nothing less than Jesus Christ the Lord, in His whole harmonious glory of Person, Work, and Word. It is deeply true that in that mighty and manifold theme there are points which must be always prominent and ruling; and most surely the man-humbling and soul-blessing truths of the Atoning Sacrifice are such points. "First of all" (we have recalled that all-significant sentence already), "first of all, Christ died for our sins." Alas for the Church, for the congregation, for the pulpit, where that is forgotten, obscured, or put into a secondary, or perhaps a tertiary place! One thing is certain; that pulpit cannot be bearing its right witness meanwhile to the "exceeding sinfulness" of sin—not merely the deformity of sin, but the awful evil and condemnable guilt of sin. But then it is a thing to be regretted (and corrected) when the Pastor's preaching is

1 Cor. xv. 3.

Rom. vii. 13.

always and only concerned with the urgent need, and wonderful provision, for the pardon and acceptance of the believing sinner. I dare to say it is impossible that such preaching should be permanently, or even long, interesting and attractive, and this because of the nature of the case. Man's fallen and sinful soul needs pardon unspeakably, and always, but it needs it as a means to an end; and that end is nearness to God, conformity to Him, power to do His blessed will as His servant for ever. For this same great end the soul needs, even in the range of truths which are of the order of means, to learn more than the glorious *rudiments* of forgiveness. It needs to know something of the heavenly Offices of the once Crucified One: His Mediation, Suretyship, and Intercession; His Priesthood; His Royalty; His Headship. In Him lie stored the divine treasures with which our *whole* extent of need is to be met. And the preacher who would permanently attract his people, by bringing out of his storehouse things eternally old and new, must seek and pray to preach Christ fully.

To some devoted men it seems impossible not to be always preaching the glory of "Christ *for* us"; others can never leave the precious theme of "Christ *in* us." But if they are not missioners, but pastors, they will assuredly find that a *permanent* attraction can only be secured by doing what the Word of God does—setting forth *both* glorious sets of truths in fulness, in harmony, and in application to the realities of sin and of life.

So we have thought awhile about attractive preaching. Need I say again what the sort of attractiveness is which I have in view? It is indeed, on the surface, attraction to the church, attraction to the sermon; but its whole inner purpose is an attraction which neither church nor sermon can in the least degree cause, but which the Eternal Spirit, sovereign and loving, can cause through them—an attraction to Jesus Christ, in true repentance, living faith, genuine surrender, and patient, happy service.

"*Ye servants of God, your Master proclaim,*
And publish abroad His wonderful Name;
The Name all victorious of Jesus extol,
His kingdom is glorious and rules over all.

"*Then let us adore and give Him His right,*
All glory and power, all wisdom and might,
All honour and blessing with angels above,
And thanks never ceasing, and infinite love."

C. WESLEY.

CHAPTER XII

PREACHING (iii.).

Eternal Fulness, overflow to me
Till I, Thy vessel, overflow for Thee;
For sure the streams that make Thy garden grow
Are never fed but by an overflow:
Not till Thy prophets with Thyself run o'er
Are Israel's watercourses full once more.

CHAPTER XII.

PREACHING (iii.).

AGAIN I treat of the sermon. We have looked, my younger Brother and I, at some main secrets and prescriptions for attractive preaching. What shall I more say on the subject of the pulpit? In the first place I will offer a few miscellaneous suggestions, and then come in closing to the deepest theme of the whole matter—Spiritual Power in Preaching.

I address myself to write, soon after delivering to my students, in the library adjoining my study, a lecture on Preaching. Let me call it rather, a talk on Sermons, which is a term less grandiose and much more true; for in fact the discourse has been a most informal series of remarks and suggestions on topics suggested by a collection of sermons written for me, and which I now came to give back,

annotated, to their writers. It occurs to me to offer my kind reader a written version of some of these remarks just made *vivâ voce* to my friends. They happen to touch on a variety of points which are not unimportant in themselves and also typical of very many more.

For the purposes of the lecture, they have been divided between matters of form and matters of substance; and I report them, or rather some of them, in that order.

1. *Remarks on Diction, Style, etc.*

(*a*) Take care to "pull the sentences together," to avoid loose and redundant phrases and words. Why write "*grief and sorrow*," "*fatigued and tired out*," "*attacks and assaults*"? A subtle intellect may see distinctions here, but it is too much for me, and, I am sure, for most plain people in church.

(*b*) Respect the Queen's English. "*The one* who lives a Christian life" is scarcely English; say "the man," not "the one." "*Like* Adam and Eve walked in Paradise"! This is a serious, though common, piece of bad grammar. Say, "*Like Adam*, when he walked, but "*As* Adam *walked*."

(*c*) Remember that the genius of English eschews a large use of *connecting words*, particularly in spoken discourse. Not often is a sentence the better for an "*and*" at the beginning. Many a "*therefore*" and "*because*" are well away, if you would speak with freedom and vigour.

(*d*) Avoid altogether such touches of expression as characterise verse, or rhetorical prose. I find in one sermon the sentence, "*Think you* St Paul trembled at the prospect?" Please rewrite this, and say, "*Do you think* St Paul was afraid?" For you certainly would not say, speaking however gravely, to your friend, "Think you that we shall have a fine day to-morrow?" Rhetorical phrases rarely give an impression of practical reality.

(*e*) Do not speak in the pulpit as if you were writing notes for an edition of the Epistles. What does the labourer (and what do many hearers more highly educated than he) think when you say, on Rom. v. 1, that "*weighty manuscript authority gives another reading*"? And what does he think you mean when you talk about "*Sheôl*"? By the way, when you

quote Scripture in the pulpit, passingly, to a general congregation, I would advise you to quote not the Revised Version, but the Authorized, which will surely be "*the* English Bible" for many long days yet. Unless you have before you some special difference between the two Versions, on which you can *stop to speak explicitly*, quote the familiar (and inimitable) diction of 1611.

(*f*) Prepare your sermon, and preach it, so that it shall be *easy to report.* One sermon here before me would be as hard as possible to retail at home. It is on Rom. v. 1, and it says some excellent things upon it. But it brings in holiness of heart where the text speaks only of acceptance of person, and it mingles the two topics so ingeniously together that the impression is seriously complicated. Think of the pious daughter yonder in church, going home to her infirm old mother, and trying to answer the question, "What did the gentleman preach about to-night?" Let us do our best to preach sermons which are not only sound, but portable.

(*g*) Take care to keep the sermon in *tune with the text.* Here is a manuscript on

Psal. v. 12, a verse of exultant joy; but the last passage of the sermon, the passage which ought to concentrate the whole message, is full of solemn *warning*. Warn by all means; do not forget to sound the watchman's Ezek. xxxiii. trumpet. But sound it in the right place.

(*h*) Here is a sermon sadly spoiled by a *long introduction*. It tells us much about the circumstances of the inspired writer, but so as to throw little light on the message of the text. Here is another, on the wonderfully definite hope of blessedness after death given us in Phil. i. 21. This also is ruined by its introduction, which truly begins *ab ovo*, discussing the genesis of man's belief in immortality! That preface would leave, in the actual delivery of the sermon, about five minutes for the handling of the precious words, "To depart and to be with Christ, which is far better." Generally, be shy of much introduction and preface in the pulpit. I do not mean that we are never to elucidate connexions and contexts. But, remember limits. Your minutes are few, ah, so few, for such a Message,—Christ Jesus in His fulness, for man's need in

its depth. Pass quickly through the porch into that Church.

(*i*) When you refer to *Scripture facts*, be accurate; a slip-shod habit there may fatally prejudice a not quite friendly hearer who knows something of the Bible; and it will certainly do no good to *any* hearer. Here is a sermon on Phil. i. 21, and it speaks of St Paul as writing to Philippi from his "*dark cell.*" But St Luke Acts xxviii. 30. says that he was "in his own hired house," or at worst, "his own hired rooms." Here again I read of David as returning to "Jerusalem, *the city of his fathers.*" But his fathers had lived and died at Bethlehem; and Jerusalem was in heathen hands till David himself took it!

2. *Remarks on Points in the Substance of the Sermons.*

(*a*) Are you quite sure that the Patriarchs had no anticipation of a life eternal? Many lecturers, and many editors, now say so. But the Epistle to the Hebrews says that "they Heb. xi. 16. desired a better country, that is an heavenly"; and that is better evidence for this purpose than any inferences (or beliefs) of

modern "scholarship." True, the old saints say little explicitly about their hope. But many things lie deep in a man's faith, and in his experience too, about which, for various reasons, he may say very little.

(*b*) I do not like this sentence, which says that the later Prophets had a "*fuller perception* of" the eternal future than their predecessors. Not that I blame the phrase in itself; but I dislike its associations. There runs a strong drift in modern theology, as we all know, towards the explanation of Scripture by "perception" rather than by revelation. "The Lord appeared unto me"; "The Lord spake unto me"; say the Prophets, and they appeal occasionally to supernatural attestation of their assertions. But the modern expository savant, wiser to be sure than the Prophet, assures us that they arrived at their messages by observation, by meditation, by development of thought and character, and practically by nothing different from these things. Accordingly, their "inspiration" was strictly speaking the same in kind as that of a Chrysostom, or a Luther, or a Shakespeare. Do not you say so, or

imply that it is so. Do not go for mere company's sake with the current of naturalistic thought. Sure I am that you are most unlikely, if you do, to be the instrument of *super*natural *effects* in your preaching.

(*c*) "What is Justification? It is, *the making man just.*" Is it indeed? I should read that sentence with alarm, if I did not know the writer! Its sentiment is practically Roman Catholic. Moreover, it puts a meaning on the word in question, contradicted by the common usages of language; an important consideration when we study a Scriptural theological term. When I "justify my opinion" I do not *make it right*, but vindicate it as already right. When the Hebrew judge "justified the right-
Deut. xxv. 1. eous," he did not improve him, but pronounced him satisfactory to the law. And when God, for Christ's sake, justifies you who believe in Jesus, He does not in that act make you good; He pronounces you, for His Son's sake, to be satisfactory to His Law, for purposes of your personal acceptance.

(*d*) "Why has faith such power to justify? Because, *carried out to its fullest extent, it im-*

plies assimilation to its Object." Here again I should be alarmed, if I did not know the writer's general convictions, which are sound enough. But this particular sentence again is in full harmony with Romanist doctrine. And, as a fact, with the Bible open, and with usages of common language before us, it can easily be exposed as a confusion of words and thought. Faith, carried out ever so fully, is just faith still; personal reliance, personal confidence on God in His Word. That reliance is His appointed (and divinely natural) way for our reception of Jesus Christ. For our Justification, it receives Christ in His merits; it does *that*, and that only, and always. For our Sanctification, it receives Christ in His inward power, by the Holy Ghost. But faith is just faith, to the end.

(*e*) "We are not *forced* to receive salvation." Most true. "He enforceth not the will." But do not forget on the other hand to magnify the necessity of grace, "preventing grace," Art. x. that is to say, God Himself "working in us *to will*" to receive our salvation. The Phil. ii. 13. two sides of truth are both divine. Do not

neglect either, whether you can harmonize them or not here below.

Such are some specimens of a Saturday morning's talk in our library. They are taken, just as they come, from notes constructed after the study of a set of some twenty sermons, written, and then commented upon, without the slightest thought that any public or permanent use would be made of the materials thus given. But perhaps the remarks may be in point to some of my readers all the more because of the unstudied nature of the materials.

Let me say, before I quite leave this part of my subject, that adverse criticism was by no means my only work this morning in the lecture-room. It was my happiness, on the other hand, to commend thankfully many a clear setting of living truth, and many a sentence of forcible point and of true beauty, happy omens for future years, in which, if it please God, "the torch shall be carried on," bright and clear, when we elders shall be heard no more.[1]

[1] Ungracious as it may seem, I must betray one less pleasant

But now let me return from this discursive report of a sermon-lecture to some more central thoughts about the Preaching of the Word. Sacred, solemn theme! I was made to realize its character in a peculiar way quite lately, when reading a heart-searching and most instructive essay, by the Rev. R. Glover, Vicar of St Luke's, West Holloway, entitled, *My Cases of Old Sermons.*[1] The essay was simply an experienced preacher's review of many years of pulpit labour, in the light of the collected and ordered manuscripts which silently represented it. The writer had much to say, to my great profit, about his methods of preparation and delivery, and about the pains taken to distribute the choice of texts widely and impartially over the field of Scripture.

confidence of such occasions. Sometimes I have had to note in sermon MSS. a strange neglect of punctuation, and, here and there, a little aberration from received usages of spelling! No Clergyman ought to think such matters beneath his notice. His people, some, if not many of them, will from time to time receive letters or other written messages from him; these ought to be unmistakably the writing of the educated gentleman. Is it too much to say also that *the handwriting* ought to be clear and easy? It is distressing, certainly to one who has many letters to read daily, to see how *rare* such handwriting is now.

[1] In *The Churchman* of August, 1891.

Then he went on to speak of the ascertained spiritual history of some of those many sermons; the messages to souls which in this or that instance they had carried; the savour of life unto life, or perhaps, alas, of death unto death, which had to his knowledge breathed from them. The impressions left on my mind were, above all others, two; first, the call to thorough diligence in preparation, if the preacher is to give his account with joy; and then, the indescribable solemnity and greatness of the work of a true pastor-preacher. I may seem to reiterate too much, but I *must* say again, with new emphasis, to my younger Brother, resolve to be a preacher indeed, by the grace of God. Do not let secondary things, however good, distort your attention from that supremely sacred commission, "Preach the 2 Tim. iv. 2. Word; be instant, in season, out of season[1]; reprove, rebuke, exhort, with all long-suffering and doctrine. *For*," the Apostle significantly proceeds, "the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine."

[1] That is, irrespective of *your own* convenience.

Therefore, an age impatient of thorough Scriptural preaching is the very age in which to seek, in wisdom and courage, to make much of it. Do not let organization spoil your preaching-work. Do not let current events spoil it. Do not let elaboration of ritual spoil it. Do not let organist and choir rule over you, and claim for music the precious moments called for by the Word.

Let me present to my reader, in this last chapter, an extract from an old book which however may be new to him. The book is not one which as a whole I greatly love; how could I? It is that sternly-imposed substitute for the Book of Common Prayer, commonly known as the Parliamentary Directory of 1645; the exact title is, *A Directory for the Publique Worship of God in the Three Kingdomes.*[1] Its associations are altogether with an unhappy time, in which it was a seriously penal offence, at least in theory, to use the Prayer Book even at a sick friend's bedside. Yet great men of God

[1] It is printed in W. K. Clay's *Book of Common Prayer Illustrated.* Parker, 1841.

had a hand in the making of the Directory; and their words are well worth the reading. In particular, I find in the volume one passage, full of golden wisdom, a precious message to all Christian preachers. It is the section which I now quote exactly as it first appeared, and which is entitled

"Of the Preaching of the Word.

"Preaching of the Word, being the power of God unto Salvation, and one of the greatest and most excellent Works belonging to the Ministry of the Gospell, should bee so performed, that the Workman need not bee ashamed, but may save himself, and those that heare him.

"It is presupposed (according to the Rules for Ordination) that the Minister of Christ is in some good measure gifted for so weighty a service, by his skill in the Originall Languages, and in such Arts and Sciences as are handmaids unto Divinity, by his knowledge in the whole Body of Theology, but most of all in the holy Scriptures, having his senses and heart exercised in them above the common sort of

Beleevers; and by the illumination of Gods Spirit, and other gifts of edification, which (together with reading and studying of the Word) he ought still to seek by Prayer, and an humble heart, resolving to admit and receive any truth not yet attained, when ever God shall make it known unto him. All which hee is to make use of, and improve, in his private preparations, before hee deliver in publike what he hath provided.

"Ordinarily, the subject of his Sermon is to be some Text of Scripture, holding forth some principle or head of Religion; or suitable to some speciall occasion emergent; or hee may goe on in some Chapter, Psalme, or Booke of the holy Scripture, as hee shall see fit.

"Let the Introduction to his Text be brief and perspicuous, drawn from the Text itself, or context, or some parallel place, or generall sentence of Scripture.

"If the Text be long (as in Histories and Parables it sometimes must be) let him give a briefe summe of it; if short, a Paraphrase thereof, if need be: In both, looking diligently to the scope of the Text, and pointing at the

chief heads and grounds of Doctrine, which he is to raise from it.

"In Analysing and dividing his Text, he is to regard more the order of matter, then of words; and neither to burden the memory of the hearers in the beginning with too many members of Division, nor to trouble their minds with obscure terms of Art.

"In raising Doctrines from the Text, his care ought to bee, First, that the matter be the truth of God. Secondly, that it be a truth contained in or grounded on that Text, that the hearers may discern how God teacheth it from thence. Thirdly, that he chiefly insist upon those Doctrines which are principally intended, and make most for the edification of the hearers.

"The Doctrine is to be expressed in plaine termes; or if any thing in it need explication, is to bee opened, and the consequence also from the Text cleared. The parallel places of Scripture confirming the Doctrine are rather to bee plaine and pertinent, then many, and (if need bee) somewhat insisted upon, and applyed to the purpose in hand.

"The Arguments or Reasons are to bee solid; and, as much as may bee, convincing. The illustrations, of what kind soever, ought to bee full of light, and such as may convey the truth into the Hearers heart with spirituall delight.

"If any doubt, obvious from Scripture, Reason, or Prejudice of the Hearers, seem to arise, it is very requisite to remove it, by reconciling the seeming differences, answering the reasons, and discovering and taking away the causes of prejudice and mistake. Otherwise, it is not fit to detain the hearers with propounding or answering vaine or wicked Cavils, which as they are endlesse, so the propounding and answering of them doth more hinder than promote edification.

"Hee is not to rest in generall Doctrine, although never so much cleared and confirmed, but to bring it home to speciall use, by application to his hearers: Which albeit it prove a worke of great difficulty to himselfe, requiring much prudence, zeale, and meditation, and to the naturall and corrupt man will bee very unpleasant; yet hee is to endeavour to perform it

in such a manner that his auditors may feele the Word of God to be quick and powerfull, and a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart; and that if any unbeleever or ignorant person bee present, hee may have the secrets of his heart made manifest, and give glory to God.

"In the Use of Instruction or information in the knowledge of some truth, which is a consequence from his Doctrine, he may (when convenient) confirm it by a few firm arguments from the Text in hand, and other places in Scripture, or from the nature of that Common place in Divinity, whereof that truth is a branch.

"In Confutation of false Doctrines, he is neither to raise an old Heresie from the grave, nor to mention a blasphemous opinion unnecessarily; but if the people be in danger of an errour, he is to confute it soundly, and endeavour to satisfie their judgements and consciences against all objections.

"In exhorting to Duties, he is, as he seeth cause, to teach also the meanes that help to the performance of them.

"In Dehortation, Reprehension, and publique Admonition (which require speciall wisdome) let him, as there shall be cause, not only discover the nature and greatnesse of the sin, with the misery attending it, but also shew the danger his hearers are in to be overtaken and surprised by it, together with the remedies and best way to avoyd it.

"In applying Comfort, whether generall against all tentations, or particular against some speciall troubles or terrours, he is carefully to answer such objections, as a troubled heart and afflicted spirit may suggest to the contrary.

"It is also sometimes requisite to give some Notes of tryal (which is very profitable, especially when performed by able and experienced Ministers, with circumspection and prudence, and the Signes cleerely grounded on the Holy Scripture) whereby the Hearers may be able to examine themselves, whether they have attained those Graces, and performed those duties to which he Exhorteth, or be guilty of the sin Reprehended, and in danger of the judgments Threatened, or are such to whom

the Consolations propounded doe belong; that accordingly they may be quickened and excited to Duty, humbled for their Wants and Sins, affected with their Danger, and strengthened with Comfort, as their condition upon examination shall require.

"And, as he needeth not alwayes to prosecute every Doctrine which lies in his Text, so is he wisely to make choice of such Uses, as by his residence and conversing with his flocke, he findeth most needfull and seasonable: and, amongst these, such as may most draw their soules to Christ, the Fountaine of light, holinesse and comfort.

"This method is not prescribed as necessary for every man, or upon every Text; but only recommended, as being found by experience to be very much blessed of God, and very helpful for the people's understandings and memories.

"But the Servant of Christ, whatever his Method be, is to perform his whole Ministery;

"1. *Painfully*, not doing the work of the Lord negligently.

"2. *Plainly*, that the meanest may under-

stand, delivering the truth, not in the entising words of mans wisdome, but in demonstration of the Spirit and of power, least the Crosse of Christ should be made of none effect: abstaining also from an unprofitable use of unknown Tongues, strange phrases, and cadences of sounds and words, sparingly citing sentences of Ecclesiasticall, or other humane Writers, ancient or moderne, be they never so elegant.

"3. *Faithfully*, looking at the honour of Christ, the conversion, edification and salvation of the people, not at his own gains or glory: keeping nothing back which may promote those holy ends, giving to every one his own portion, and bearing indifferent respect unto all, without neglecting the meanest, or sparing the greatest in their sins.

"4. *Wisely*, framing all his Doctrines, Exhortations, and especially his Reproofs, in such a manner as may be most likely to prevaile, shewing all due respect to each mans person and place, and not mixing his own passion or bitternesse.

"5. *Gravely*, as becometh the Word of God,

shunning all such gesture, voice and expressions as may occasion the corruptions of men to despise him and his Ministry.

"6. *With loving affection*, that the people may see all coming from his Godly zeale, and hearty desire to doe them good. And

"7. *As taught of God*, and perswaded in his own heart, that all that he teacheth, is the truth of Christ; and walking before his flock as an example to them in it; earnestly, both in private and publique, recommending his labours to the blessing of God, and watchfully looking to himselfe and the flock whereof the Lord hath made him overseer. So shall the Doctrine of truth be preserved uncorrupt, many soules converted, and built up, and himselfe receive manifold comforts of his labours even in this life, and afterward the Crown of Glory laid up for him in the world to come.

"Where there are more Ministers in a Congregation than one, and they of different guifts, each may more especially apply himselfe to Doctrine or Exhortation, according to the guift wherein he most excelleth, and as they agree between themselves."

I have little to say after the recitation of this passage of pregnant and solemn counsel. That little shall be given to a supreme aspect of the whole subject; I mean, Spiritual Power in Preaching. Who that knows the Lord, and contemplates the preacher's work, does not long for Spiritual Power? By that longing he means no ambitious wish to be remarkable, nor any unwholesome craving to be a leader in scenes of religious excitement. He means the deep desire to be an effectual messenger of his Master; to be the living channel of the Holy Spirit's energy in His converting, sanctifying, strengthening, perfecting work. He knows that it is possible to be truly orthodox, and yet not to be this; to be eloquent, to be impressive, to be impassioned, and yet not to be this; to be unimpeachably truthful, reasonable, intel lectually convincing, and yet all the while not to be this. How shall he be a vehicle of spiritual power?

The Scriptural answer is very simple, but it goes deep. If a man would have spiritual power with men, and prevail, he must be real with his Lord. What he says, he must first

know, he must first live. As regards HIM who is at once his Master and his Gospel, he
2 Tim. i. 10. must indeed "*know* whom he has believed," and, in calm but entire simplicity, "*submit himself* under His hands." Granted a true creed, and a humble faith in its Subject, he must, in quiet reality, "yield himself unto God," if he would be used by Him. Observe
Rom. vi. 13. the Apostle's phrase; "Yield yourselves," παραστήσατε ἑαυτούς: not, "yield to God" (though that is implied), but, "yield *yourselves*, hand yourselves over, to God," as you would hand over a tool, a weapon. And another aspect of the same thing appears in the same Apostle's later words: "*If a man*
2 Tim. ii. 21. *purge himself* of these, he *shall be a vessel* unto honour, sanctified (to), and meet for, the Master's use," ἡγιασμένον εὔχρηστον τῷ Δεσπότῃ.

The deepest secret of spiritual power, in God's sense of the phrase, lies there. Let the man be watchful over his Scriptural creed, and let him discipline his life, and let him toil in his study, and among his people. None of these things can be spared; they are all vital. But

the central secret, which they as it were enclose and protect, lies in the words *Surrender in faith.* And the Christian man's heart must be its own inquisitor, before God, in the inquiry after the point, or points, where you, where I, need to make that surrender for ourselves.

In the void thus left, in the chasm thus cut deep into our ambitions, into our self-love, the mighty Spirit in His tranquil fulness will spring up. And then, whether we know it or not, we Ministers of the Word shall assuredly be vehicles of spiritual power, to our Lord's praise.

So let me close these fragmentary words spoken "to my younger Brethren." May God's mercy be upon the writer. Upon the readers, whom he loves in the Lord, may grace and peace come every hour and day, in secret, in society, in holy ministration of Word and Ordinance. And in due time, when they are no longer juniors but, if the Lord will, veterans and leaders in the work, may they in turn pass on the message to those who follow, in the name of Jesus Christ. Amen.

"Christianity is so great and surprising in its nature that, in preaching it to others, I have no encouragement but in the belief of a continued divine operation. It is no difficult thing to change a man's opinions. It is no difficult thing to attach a man to my person and notions. It is no difficult thing to convert a proud man to spiritual pride, or a passionate man to passionate zeal for some religious party. But to bring a man to love God, to love the law of God while it condemns him, to loathe himself before God, to tread the earth under his feet, to hunger and thirst after God in Christ, and after the mind that was in Christ, this is impossible. But God has said it shall be done; and bids me go forth and preach, that by me, as His instrument, He may effect these great ends; and therefore I go."

Cecil.

FORDINGTON PULPIT:

A PREACHER'S WEEKDAY THOUGHTS,

Written, in 1878, *in the Church of the Author's Baptism, and where he first Ministered as his Father's Curate.*

MANY voices yester-even
Made these walls and arches ring
With their high-sung hopes of Heaven,
And the glories of its King;
Now my footfall sounds alone
On the aisle's long path of stone,
Save that yonder from the loft,
With a solemn tone and soft,
Beating on with muffled shock,
Conscience-waking, speaks the clock.
Holy scene, and dear as holy,
Let me ponder thee this hour,
Not in aimless melancholy,
But in quest of Heaven-given power;
Seeking here to win anew
Contrite love and purpose true;
Near the Font whose dew-drops cold
Fell upon my brow of old,
Near the well-rememberd seat
Set beside my Mother's feet;

Near the Table where I bent
At that earliest Sacrament.
Let me, through this narrow door,
Climb the Pulpit's steps once more.
Blessed place! the Master's Word,
Child and man, I hence have heard;
Awful place! for hence, in turn,
I have taught, so slow to learn.
To the silence now to hearken
Here I mount and stand alone,
While the spaces round me darken
And the Church is all my own;
While the sun's last glories fall
From the window of the tower,
Tracing slow their parting hour
On the stones of floor and wall.
Seems a secret Voice to thrill
All the dusky air so still;
Turns a soul-compelling gaze
On me from the sunset haze:
Sure the eternal Shepherd's hand
Beckons me awhile apart,
Bids me in His presence stand
While He looks me through the heart.
Sinful preacher, ask again
In this nearness of thy Lord,
How to HIM has rung thy strain,
When it seem'd to speak His Word.
'Midst thy brethren's listening numbers
Hast thou felt, with heart sincere,
How, in thought that never slumbers,
This great Listener stood more near?—

Listening to His own high Name
Spoken by His creature's breath;
How from out the Heavens He came,
How He pour'd His soul in death,
How He triumph'd o'er the grave,
How He lives on high to save,
How He yet again shall come,
Lord of glory and of doom.
Has He found thy message true?
Truth, and truly spoken too?
Utter'd with a purpose whole,
From a self-forgetful soul,
Bent on nothing save the fame
Of the dear redeeming Name,
And the pardon, life, and bliss
Of the souls He bought for His?
Think!—But ah, from thoughts like these
Hasten, sinner, to thy knees.

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To my younger brethren

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